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WITT CENTENNIAL

1868 - 1968

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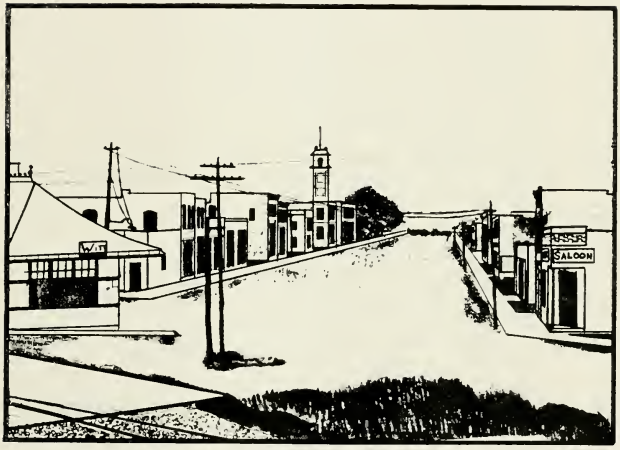
ILL. HIST. SURVEY

WITT CENTENNIAL

WITT, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, ILLINOIS



BROADWAY — 1916

1868 - 1968

FOREWARD

Four score and twenty years ago our fathers brought forth within this township a settlement conceived with vision and dedicated to the proposition that MAN must build for future MEN.

Now—with sincere wishes for continuance of the prosperity they made possible with abiding faith in our future and in the guiding spirit of an All-wise Providence that has led us through the last century and brought us from trials and tribulations to our present standing—we submit this volume for your consideration.

AERIAL VIEW CITY OF WITT — JUNE 1968

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Back row, left to right: Andrew Sarsany, Arnold Lapsansky, Louis Schwartz, John Yuna, John T. Lowe, Chal Golitko, Paul Sarsany

Front row, left to right: Edna Tucker, Bertha Shelton, Virginia Charnisky, Elaine Kuethe, Freda Yuna, Gladys Hanisko, Mary Shelton, Grace Beckham.

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Co-Chairmen: Paul Hamrock, Lynn Shelton

Book Committee: Frances Pircher, Andrew Sarsany, Kathleen Lowe, Minnie Cadman, Grace Beckham, Edna Tucker, Bertha Shelton, Pat Baird, Bob Baird, Fern Tucker, Pat Herpstreith, Anna M. McNeill Evelyn Degg, Ruby DeLuka, Evelyn Wittnam, Dorothy Rogers

Souvenirs: Louis Schwartz, Ruby DeLuka, Tillie Chervinko, Verona Sarsany, Anne Truhan, Margaret Korbar

Promotion: John Yuna, Freda Yuna, Keith Fath, Don Rundle, Eleanor Rundle

Pageant: Barbara Golitko, Jean Sarsany, Helen Nicolotti, Louis Nicolotti, Harold Miller, Francis Holthaus, Charles DeLuka, Mary Phillips

Centennial Ball: Chal Golitko, Frank Bregant, Evelyn Bregant, Evelyn Lapsansky, Geneva Coffey, Ruby Degg, John T. Lowe

Publicity: Bob Worthington, Father Shea, Arnold Lapsansky, Mary Fath.

Parade: Al Lowe, Russell Masters, Skeet O'Malley

Antiques: Gladys Hanisko, Virginia Charnisky, Lawrence Huber, Page Walcher.

Dress and Beards: Wayne Kuethe, Elaine Kuethe, Jerry Wesley, Mary Shelton, Keith Fath, Joyce Shelton.

HISTORY OF WITT

America has often been called a melting pot. The Witt Community could likewise be called by the same name. For here in this central Illinois community came farmers, miners, merchants, railroad men, doctors, millers, etc. Their forefathers came from nearly every continent on the globe. Here they fashioned a settlement.

This Centennial History calls up memories of the settlement of Melrose, Witt, Chance and Paisley and the union of the twin-rivals into one city which received its City Charter 1911.

May all our future rivalries be as wisely settled.

Aerial View Of
Witt
1968
Looking
Northwest

THE ROAD WEST

HISTORY OF WITT TOWNSHIP

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century little progress had been made in extending English settlements westward from a settled strip along the eastern seaboard. Travelers beyond the mountains, which unfortunately had been explored first by the French brought back glowing accounts of the possibilities for settlements in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys.

In 1763 the French made settlements at Cahokia and Kaskaskia which were the beginning of what was to become ILLINOIS named from ILLINI the Algonquin word for "perfect and accomplished man".

By the treaty ending the French and Indian War, Britain gained land from the Alleghenies to the Mississippi but lost it to the United States in 1783. Virginia had secured a claim to Illinois through the campaign of George Rogers Clark during the Revolution.

Illinois, as a commonwealth, remained a part of Virginia until 1787 when it was conceded to the Northwest Territory and continued so until 1808 when it became a separate territory. After Illinois was admitted to the Union as a state in 1818 a county called Bond was formed which included Montgomery. In 1821, by an Act of the Legislature, Montgomery became a separate county.

The Kickapoos were the most numerous tribe of Indians in this neighborhood. In 1817, the U. S. Government acting through the territorial governor had made a treaty with the Kickapoos for the purchase of 10,000,000 acres of land which included Montgomery County. Rountree Township had been an Indian Camping Ground but the tribe was friendly and interested in white settlers. The Indians made presents to the Nussman family, traded them deer and venison for bacon and ammunition. To prove their friendship, when visiting, the Indians left their guns outside.

The first settlements had been made in the county in 1816 by families from Tennessee, Georgia, Kentucky, the Carolinas, and Ohio. Witt Township was one of the later townships to be settled because of lack of roads.

In the 1850's the railroad fever struck Illinois and the Illinois Central received a land grant from the legislature. Hillsboro sought Alton as terminus for an east-west line and in 1855 subscribed $50,000 to help bring into being the Terra Haute-Alton (later St. Louis) R.R. It came into existence as a working road in 1857 and crossed Sec. 9 of Montgomery Co. This locale became the stage on which William Wood was to play his act as founder. Wood had come to Hillsboro from North Carolina. On the Vandalia-St. Louis Highway he built Woodsboro; but his village was by-passed by the railroad and he moved to Butler that was to have a spur line to the main artery of the railroad.

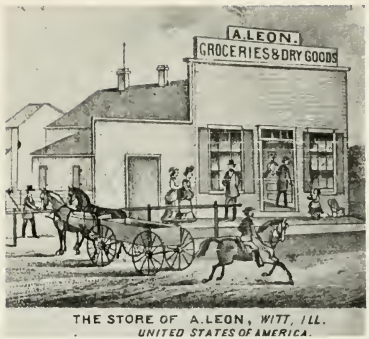
Restless because he could not dominate Butler, Wood purchased land in sections five and six of township nine (Witt). Township 9 range 2 had been settled as early as 1831 when James and David Brown built cabins on either side of East Fork in Section 17. In 1900 their farms were owned by Mr. Thumb of Irving and Mr. Blipsen. Then in 1833 came Martin Harkey from North Carolina. He went on to Nokomis in 1837. Christopher Armentrout bought eighty acres of school land near the Browns and later Harkey's interests. Jas. R. Brown, born Jan. 28, 1832, first child born in township.

Distance from towns of any size made settling slow. A road was laid out known as the Shelbyville-Hillsboro road, another to Nokomis from a southerly direction hastened settlement in township 9.

In 1839 Joshua Seckler located in section 9. Wm. Lights came to section 8 in 1841 but sold his holdings to Alfred Borer and moved on to Iowa.

Other early settlers were: Horace Latimer, L. T. Towell, Wm. Hand, E. H. Donaldson, Chas. Mast, H. A. Wells, Jacob Poland, Wilson Maxey, John Price, J. T. Armentrout, George Knodle, Thos. Vermillion, Andrew Hcehn, Sherman Ransdell, J. W. Chapman, Wm. Oberlee, Geo. Guile, P. C. Able, Austin Sturgeon, Wilson Wilder, Louis Duncan, Jas. Bateman, Jas. Zepp, C. Marks, W. W. Wright, Levi Thumb, W. T. Hoes, W. H. Settle, Jas. Drew, Chas. Madan, J. M. Neisler, F. M. Roberts, Mike Baisch, Robt. Dixon, the Hubers, the Lohrs, and Daniel Grantham.

Though the township was crossed by the railroad, there was no village community. Late in 1868, tired of his conflict with the village of Butler over the private railroad spur he had built, Wood moved to his township 9 holdings and began to build a village he called MELROSE. He placed a store facing that part of the Nokomis-Hillsboro Road he named Talmadge St. It was parallel to and one block north of the railroad over which the first train had run in January 1855. Later this building was occupied by Anton Leon,

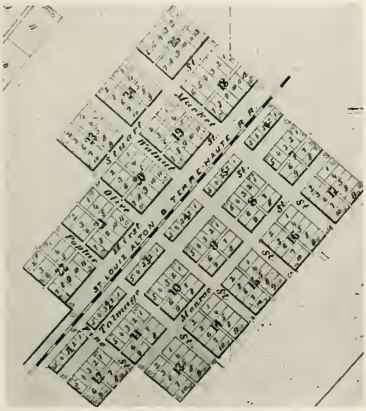


THE STORE OF A. LEON, WITT, ILL.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

—Photo Copy by Floyd Karrick, Butler, Ill.

then by Chris Marks, later by J. Wubker. In early 1900's, Carriker and Maxey had a general store at that location. Until replaced by the Martin Elevator Coal Bins, a Standard Oil Station occupied the building.

WITT



—Photo Copy by Floyd Karrick, Butler, Ill.

On Febuary 8, 1869 Wood sold seventy acres in section 5 and 6 of Township 9, on which his town failed to grow, to Thos. Saunders of Philadelphia for $25 per acre. The original site consisted of nine blocks laid out on three streets all north of the railroad.

The deed was recorded April 19, 1869 and an account of the transaction appeared in the Hillsboro Democrat, March 18.

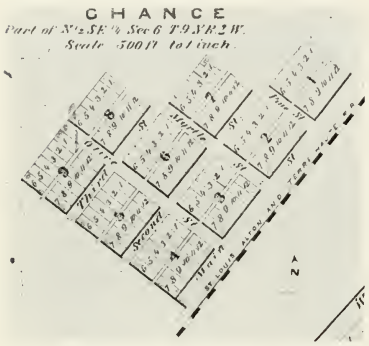
> Col. Monroe got back Saturday. He has been up about Irving surveying. Mr. Saunders from Philadelphia has bought the town of Melrose. He thinks he has made a good strike. The Wood-Butler controversy is not yet settled.

The name of the town is explained in Saunder's letter to The Hillsboro Democrat, June 3, 1869.

> Friend Jones--Witt seems a curious name to call a station but as Shakespeare says: What's in a name? A rose (MELROSE) by any other name would smell as sweet. We feel proud of our station and the benefit it will confer on our farmers, and that I have been of some service to my fellow citizens is of great gratification.

Evidently citizens of his day knew what has since been almost forgotten but recalled recently by an Armentrout descendant. The name of the town was changed because when an application was made for a U. S. Postoffice it was found Illinois had a Melrose—now Melrose Park.

Almost immediately Wood seems to have regretted his sale of the town site, moved his store across the railroad track and in section 6 of Township 9, Range 4, laid out another station he named CHANCE.



—Photo Copy by Floyd Karrick, Butler, Ill.

The following item appears in the July 29 Hillsboro Democrat.

> We would state that the old residenter and benefactor—Wm. Wood, founder of Woodsboro, Butler, Melrose, etc., has laid off another new town named Chance where he proposes to donate perfectly free of charge every alternate lot to those who will take a "Chance".

Keyes and Bartlett built a store next door to where Woods' store had been in the village he had sold and Keyes received the appointment as postmaster of the new village of Witt. Almost certainly the first postoffice was in the "Fortune" building which burned down a few years ago.

When the railroad established a station across the tracks from the elevator on the CHANCE side of the settlement the merchant Lee Hall became the first depot agent.

With the building of the station the village gained dignity. The train stop at the road crossing had been known as "Lick Skillet".

The ineffectual Terra Haute and Alton Railroad was being rebuilt as the Indianapolis and St. Louis—later it became the Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati, and St. Louis (Big 4).

Several business places had been built—a hay barn near the present location of Miller's Standard Oil Station. From it the Shuping owners shipped hay and grain by rail to St. Louis.

A creamery operated for years near where Miller's House now stands on Talmadge Street.

John Tratt had opened a store near the track and across the street from the elevator. Sam Lee bought the property in 1881 and when the elevator was discontinued brought part of it across the road and it now serves as Lee's Chicken House and storage room.

In conjunction with the elevator, N. Bentz erected a steam mill with two runs of stone and a capacity of two barrels of flour a day. Earlier a similar mill had been built in the southwest corner of the township.

David Gregory built a carding machine on his farm and ran it by horsepower. A saw was attached to the machine but Gregory did not operate the saw mill long.

—Photo Copy by Floyd Karrick, Butler, Ill.

In 1870 Sanders deserted his village and returned to Philadelphia but the town was firmly established.

Wm. Wood died in 1873 and was buried near Woodsboro. When his estate was settled, his heirs sold 110 lots which he had retained when he sold the nine "blocks" to Sanders.

ATLAS MAP

The Atlas Map of Montgomery County printed in 1874 lists these farmers of Witt as contributors to the cost of their book. They are listed with section of land, birthplace and year came to Montgomery Co. or year born in Montgomery Co.

Armentrout, J. T.	17	Montgomery Co. 1849
Battles, T. S.	15	Philadelphia 1861
Brown, J. R.	10	Montgomery Co. 1832
Brown, Algare	11	Ohio 1838
Baker, Calvin	30	Mass. 1829
Brown, Thos. J.	21	Montgomery Co. 1843
Brown, Jas. K.	21	Montgomery Co. 1846
Donaldson, E. H.	25	Fayette Co. 1861
Drew, Jas. E.	19	England 1865
Dees, John	7	Macoupin Co. 1868
Houck, Daniel	10	Pennsylvania 1863
Hard, L.	12	Ohio 1851
Hoes, W. T.	12	Maryland 1858
Hampton, Thos. W.	7	Illinois 1866
Kerr, N. H.	12	Virginia 1865
Maxey, Wilson	16	Kentucky 1835
Neisler, John	27	Montgomery Co. 1841
Oberle, Wm.	22	Germany 1869
Opdyke, W. L.	7	New Jersey 1835
Pyle, Chas.	3	Kentucky 1843
Ransdell, Geo.	9	Indiana 1866
Roberts, Peter	16	Tennessee 1869
Row, Jacob C.	2	Indiana 1867
Thumb, Marvin	19	New York 1855
Wells, J. R.	13	Virginia 1862
Wright, W. W.	1	Mass. 1836

Mrs. Alonzo Betty

(Former Ida M. Berry, picture taken 1876)

But few resident of the village were interested enough to contribute. Chapman, J. D.—Postmaster—born in Illinois came to county in 1866.

Carriker, John A.—Brickmaker from No. Carolina, Leon Anton, Merchant from Spain, 1859. McCambridge, Blair, Trader, Ireland, 1849. Melrath, Dr. M. A., Pennsylvania 1867.

1870—The census showed 126 voters in the Twp.: Dwellings 182; Farms 262; Improved Acres 18364; Horses 550; Mules 54; Sheep 197; Swine 1495; Cattle 718; Bushels of wheat 3900; bushels of corn 4377.

Chal Groner's Threshing Crew

Elevator Built by Bentz

In 1876 added mill at back. In 1901 elevator belonged to Independent Harvester Co. Sold at end of two years. Buildings moved away. Mill building is Lee Brother's Store Room. Office, granary on farm of Raymond Milburg. Man in picture Ed Chinn.

EARLY SETTLERS

Until 1872 the affairs of Montgomery County were managed by a board of three county commissioners from the various precincts. In that year, it was decided to adopt township organization and a committee was appointed to make the division and name the townships. Dr. Hood acted as secretary.

The committee selected the name WITT for T9, R2 evidently because it was the name of the only settlement in the township. In the Atlas of Montgomery County published in 1874 the township is so named.

Among the list of settlers in T9, R2, after the first wave of immigrants were: Pascal Able—born in Illinois of Ohio parents, who came to Montgomery County after service in the 47th Infantry, U. S. Army during the Civil War.

Daniel Grantham came about the same time from Carolina.

Joseph Hand, of Maine ancestry, born in Hillsboro, married an Attleberry, then moved to T. 9.

Wm. Opdyke fought in the 144th Illinois Infantry, married Julia Wood of Old Woodsboro, settled in T. 9 where his wife became active in religious affairs.

Elijah Donaldson came from Fayette County in 1871, later served in Illinois Legislature.

Other families who came were: Verickers, Beasleys, Frazers, Kings, Deans, Carstens, Lounsburys.

For the 1880 census, storekeeper Jas. M. Berry was designated census taker and Will Rhinehart clerk.

Mr. Berry reported 134 persons composed the town. This was a growth of 30% since 1870. There were 36 families, or heads of families listed but 17 cited farming as their source of income. The rudiments of a town were there. Two grocers, James Berry and Henry Wubker. Joseph Chapman was in charge of the Indianapolis and St. Louis depot. James Myers filled a real need in this farming community as the first resident blacksmith. Dr. W. W. Parkhill continued as doctor. Nicolas Benz was assisted in his implement, milling, and elevator business by two full time employees—N. Smith and P. Andrews. Thos., John, and James Vermillion, the latter the only divorced person in town, served as carpenters.

Christian Marks now kept a hotel where traveling salesmen were occasional patrons. By 1880 there was enough local stock raising to warrant a buyer—James Hull bought and sold livestock and shipped to the St. Louis and Indianapolis markets.

Only one person in 1880 is listed as a servant. Families were large and few could hire help.

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The behavior at camp meetings was not always of the best. Ministers and members had many difficulties maintaining good order, especially at night with only flickering candles for light. Frequent disturbances occurred such as shaving off horse's manes and tails, smearing tar on seats and saddles, throwing water-melon rinds and empty whiskey bottles among the mourners.

WITT DISTRICT NO. 66, 1906

The first school in Witt Township was a contribution school taught by Gay in an abandoned cabin seventeen feet square on East Fork Creek near the Browns.

A contribution school was provided whenever parents felt the need of a school and could find a teacher. State qualification laws were not enforced. Any abandoned cabin school or church was utilized.

Fees were one or two dollars per month per pupil. Schools were in session only in the winter when boys were not needed in the fields. Seats were split log benches and any table or arrangement could be used as a desk. The room was lighted by a fireplace and school was in session ten hours with only a lunch period off.

Text books included the New Testament as reader and speller, Pike's arithmetic and Kirkluan's grammar. Promotion was from book to book.

Married teachers were paid "in kind". potatoes, etc. Single teachers boarded around.

John Wheat taught in the southwest of the township until succeeded by Ben Norman in 1839.

Maxey School was the first Public School built in 1850 in Section 16 near Gooseneck Church.

During Civil War years women were permitted to teach and school board members took over the "wholloping duties". In 1877 Lizzie Shrout taught a spring term for small children. Her salary was set at 20 dollars per month. No teacher, especially a woman, should be paid more than a man.

Her school challenged Gooseneck to a spelling bee. One program of her school included the recitations: "Somebody's Darling", "Mr. Caudle's Lecture on Shirt Buttons," "No Sects In Heaven" and "Socrates Snooks".

Maple Grove School was brought from Section 7 to the present location of the Duty Home. Later it was taken near the John Maxey residence and put on a lot donated by R. Dixon. It became the Witt District 66 School. Later, as Witt grew, a third room was added.

In 1901-02 the teachers were R. Barringer and Lizzie Hughes. When the Parkview School was completed more than ninety pupils attended and the teachers were E. A. Lewey, Addie Hanks, and Eva Lewis (Mrs. N. O. Carriker).

The seven country schools that remained after Maple Grove was brought into the Witt Village limits were:

Prairie College, near Bock's, once taught by Ida Moser.

Pleasant Hill, or Thumb, in Section 19 near Norman Drew's farm.

Pleasant View, or Gooseneck, in Section 16 near land of Durward Holmes and Russell Armentrout.

Olive Branch, Section 28 near land of Lillie Knodle.

Starr, Section 21, near Anna Houck and Louis O'Malley farms.

Kroeger on Nokomis-Fillmore road.

Sandy Bend on Nokomis Blacktop north of Hamlin's.

All the buildings have been sold. Some are community centers, others have been torn down.

Railroad Station Built Half Way Between Witt and Paisley. Railroad Objected To Two Stations Only A Mile Apart.

Witt Incorporated

Witt had an existence as a village for thirty years before being incorporated as a town Aug. 25, 1895. The cost of incorporation is given in the minutes of the Town Board as $11. To Witt, Paisley—described as part of the S.W. quarter of Sec. 6, T. 9, R. 2—was annexed Aug. 27, 1905. The founder of the annexed village—George William Paisley—disconnected sixty acres of his holdings (described as part of south end of east half of N. W. quarter of Section 7) from the new town.

The first officers after incorporation were: President of Board of Trustees, Robert Dixon; Clerk, C. E. Maddox; Treas., Wm. Shuping; Trustees, Sam Lee, R. Holmes, C. Scott, E. H. Ransdell, James Hartlieb, and Alfred Gragg.

W. A. Shuping succeeded Dixon in 1904 and Dixon became Treasurer.

J. A. Waer was elected Clerk in 1901, Elisha Clark in 1904, and Geo. Powis in 1906.

Other trustees who served one or more terms during the first ten years of the Town's history were: Smallwood Ransdell, Tom Campbell, J. Callison, N. O. Carriker, George Powis, James Smith, W. S. Lyerla, Con Sullivan. J. V. Walker, R. H. Redman, J. Shannon, Caleb Marfell, B. Griffith, T. Faletta, H. Whitnack, Joe Kimball, A. Ladassor, Sam Kessinger, Stephen Hall, Wm. Holmes, Jas. Cullen, Ed Wittnam, Elisha Clark and Ed. Bottomley.

Early Business Concerns

Among business concerns mentioned in the minutes of the Board of Trustees 1898-1908 are:

Taverns: Carstens and Brakenhoff, 1898; E. Brakenhoff & Co., 1899; Mike Hanisko and John Kessinger, 1901; T. B. Jones on Lot 2, Block 10, 1902; E. Clark and Ben Rohlfing, 1903; J. Wauchalg 1903; P. A. Gary, Lot 1, Block 9, 1905. At first a license was $900 per year but soon cut to $700.

Dixon and Shuping sold the town lumber for sidewalks, 1898.

L. Ladassor paid $2 for meat market license, 1899. J. W. Osborn at east end of Broadway opposite railroad station was given permission to make truck track (20 ft. wide) to station platform from his creamery, 1905. L. Houck paid one-third of cost of sidewalk in front of his store. Carriker and Maxey of East Witt sold road scrapers to the town, 1902. C. E. Maddy rented the town a storeroom in 1904. F. S. Clark asked for a light on post near his Box Ball Alley, 1903. W. P. Hagthrop printed election ballots. W. S. Baxter was paid for blacksmith work, 1902. C. J. S. and C. S. Clickner managed light plant,

Betty's Meat Market in New Town.

1905, and sold arc lights to the town. Wm. McMahon in 1905 had Billiard Hall on Lot 22 Broadway. Walcuts Tavern was visited in 1901 by police at order of Board of Trustees and told to stop use of "indecent language". Andy Prebeck had Bowling Alley in 1901. A. Spannagel Hardware sold various articles to the town 1901-1908. Grantham and Clark obtained a slaughter house permit. Fesser Brothers Meat Market was across the track from Sam Lee's Store. Voytilla's store was one block farther east on same street near Zepp's Barber Shop and several other stores.

THE BIG FOUR TRAIL

One good state road crossed Twp. 9—THE BIG FOUR TRAIL. It extended from Hillsboro to St. Louis through Woodsboro and on south. Eastward from Hillsboro it passed through Irving and northeast to Pana and Shelbyville.

The trail entered Twp. 9 two miles north of its southern border and passed between sections 30 and 19. Just east of the Irving border on land now owned by Pearl Baker was the East Fork Post Office. Two letters bearing East Fork cancellations are owned by Russell Armentrout.

The Trail continued one-half mile to a Relay House, then turned northeastward through section 29 where the useable road now ends, crossed sections 21, 15, 14, 11, 12 and at Caesar's Creek, one mile south of the northeast corner of Twp. 9, entered Audubon.

The stage coaches used two horses except when conveying passengers, then they used four. The last contract was held by Moses David of Walshville but not renewed when the Terra Haute R.R. ran trains after January 1855.

The Relay House was erected in 1854 by John Warburton and the vicinity was known as Rushville. It was a stopping place on the Shelbyville road where tickets were sold and travelers could find meals and lodging.

The house and farm were sold in 1857 to Wm. Wolcott and in 1866 to Jas. E. Drew. Joseph Eddington bought the farm in 1904 and Joe Eddington, Jr. and his family moved there.

The Eddington children—Homer, Lynn, and Lois (Mrs. Wm. Hadley) were born there. The Relay House burned to the ground in 1917.

Roads were often bogs although the Supervisor and his Commissioners did their best with limited funds to keep up the Twp. roads. They were helped by farmers who felt responsible for their own strip of road. Yet, during January thaws, the new village of Witt could be reached only on horseback and the stage road was four miles away.

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Hogs of the early days were of one breed—a lank sharp-nosed, long-legged, ravenous creature that ran wild in the woods three-fourths of the year. Near winter, they were driven into enclosures, fed nuts and acorns, and fattened for slaughter.

In this picture, taken in 1894, left to right, are, Mollie Mowry (Mrs. Walter Satterlee), Susie Drew (Mrs. Harvey Neisler), Mrs. Elva Drew, Bert Walcher, Miss Tempa Myers who taught Pleasant Hill rural school (later Mrs. Will Whitlock of Bost Hill). Nettie Drew is on the far right.

The dapple horse hitched to the buggy and held by Bert Drew was named "Old John".

Taylor's Store

PAISLEY

In 1879 George Paisley interested himself in Witt. After completing his education in the Hillsboro Academy he enlisted in an Illinois regiment and fought in the Civil War. Returning to Hillsboro he practiced law, became owner-publisher of The Montgomery News and interested himself in developing mine properties. Perhaps with this in mind, he bought a section of land north of Witt in 1879.

In 1894 Paisley purchased more land southwest of the original town and sank a coal mine. He was not inclined toward amalgamation with Witt and built his own town one mile away and called it—Paisley.

The deed transfers for this property were recorded Oct. 19, 1895. Paisley built a depot and a postoffice but had trouble convincing both the railroad and the federal government that stops were indicated within one mile of an already established station. Kate Daly became postmistress.

A school was built—afterwards Dist. 64. An elevator was opened by Ernst who had bought out The Independent Harvester Co. Elevator in the original town of Witt. Dave Taylor's General Store soon was built. Betty and Mitchell's Soft Drink Bottling Works and The Oland Brick and Tile Co. opened in the early 1900's. The Blue Goose Saloon, a Bowling Alley, Purdy Hotel and various other shops were built on Main Street.

Paisley's partner in the coal mine operation was T. A. Padden. The mining was a primitive operation by modern standards. The miners were lowered 600 feet in a not too stable conveyance, to feel their way with only oil head lamps to guide their passage. The coal was hauled from "the face" by mule carts pulled over rails of wood.

The lowering of miners began at 7:00 A. M., but since they walked to the "face" where coal was dug, the work day began at 8:00. There was an extra hour at close of the day's work to get to the cage for hoisting to the surface. There were no wash houses yet required at the mine and the family kitchen served in that capacity.

Strikes came every April first and lasted for months. The mules were hoisted to the surface and put to pasture. When strikes ended, storekeepers and miners rejoiced—the mules protested.

The Burnwell Coal Co., connected with Big Four R. R. interests, purchased the mine in 1906 and then sank another mine north of Witt.

The second mine was more modern. Mules brought the coal from the face to the main corridors where motors pulled the loaded cars to the cages to be hoisted to the surface. The corridors were lighted by electricity.

Miners at No. 14

ready to be lowered to

work areas.

The mine had a succession of owners: Burnwell, Dering Coal Co., Peabody and finally Illinois-Indiana Coal Co., managed by Steffen's of Chicago. Kortkamp, Taylor Springs, Witt No. 12 and No. 14, plus No. 10 at Nokomis belonged to the same interests.

Edward Bottomley was replaced by Wm. T. Haywood as Supt. The mine staff when closed was W. T. Haywood, Supt.; Frank Malchior, Asst.; Jim Seletto, face boss; P. P. Pircher, motor boss.

For several years an electric light plant at Mine No. 12 produced power for No. 10 and sold electricity to Witt. The engineers at the plant were Robt. Bottomley, Harry Ludewick and August Gorsage.

The Illinois-Iowa Electric Co. purchased the plant whose machinery was shipped elsewhere. Witt became part of the Central Illinois lighting system.

POLICE

In a quiet country village there was little need for police protection and jails, but as Witt grew it was necessary to provide a "calaboose" and give some officer the duty of seeing that it was occupied—at least at times.

The street commissioner in 1898 was Howard Tucker hired at $1 per day. In 1901 his successor, John Hibsman, was given the added duty of policeman at 15 cents per hour if on duty after his regular day's work was finished.

A "calaboose" was constructed 10 by 16 by 8 ft. on alley running NW and SE in Block 22 next to Fesser's Butcher Shop. Meals for the prisoners were to be provided by contract at 20 cents each. Fines could be paid by labor for the Town at 75 cents per day.

The combined Street Commissioner-Police job was not popular and the office holder seldom finished out a year's term. Among the early police officers, many of whom were special police only, at $2 per day, were: S. T. Lockard Andrew Redman, J. B. Walker, C. B. Barringer, John Hampton, Aaron Coffey, John Foxx and H. Brackenhoff.

ORDINANCES NEVER REPEALED

Behind the City Hall is the City Jail into which the lawbreakers, whose punishment is more than a fine, may be locked up.

In early 1900's those unable to pay fines slept in the jail, received free meals and worked out their fine at seventy-five cents a day. A favorite labor was cutting grass along Broadway with a sickle, or later, a hand mower.

Those who became noisy after drinking too much in one of our twelve saloons (not yet named taverns) were given this hospitable treatment.

One frequent guest—noted for his loud singing and speech making—would start out after breakfast with his mower, travel one-half block to first saloon; go in for a cooling drink (his family's credit was good) rest a

U. S. Post Office, Witt, Illinois

while; cut a little more grass, go in saloon No. 2. After several repetitions—growing more noisy at each stop—the City Police locked him up again.

Some of the City Ordinances never repealed provide fines for failure to obey these rules:

No boy, or other person, shall on Sunday play or engage in any exercise, game or sport calculated to disturb the peace and quiet of any citizen.

No person may ride or drive a horse or mule, or other animal at a speed greater than eight miles per hour, nor turn corners, at greater than five miles per hour.

No person shall appear in a public place, or place open to public view, in garb not belonging to his or her sex.

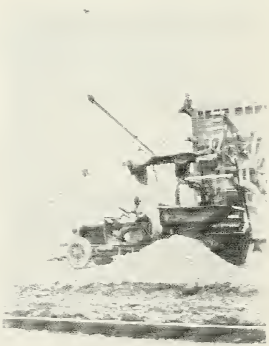
No person shall ride a bicycle, tricycle, or pull coasting sleds or wagons on sidewalk.

No one shall use or exhibit machines having a tendency to frighten horses.

No one shall fasten tin cans to dogs' tails nor permit such animals to run at large.

No one shall stroll about the streets late at night.

BUILDING NOKOMIS-HILLSBORO HARDROAD



CHURCHES

The first church in Township 9 was organized by Rev. Aldridge, a circuit rider, on East Fork Creek near the home of the Browns. The congregation met in a school house until a church was built in 1855. Later most of the members formed the congregation of the Gooseneck Church further north. Among the members were: Paisleys, Armentrouts, Hightowers, Smiths and Borers.

A newspaper notice concerning services in this church (1877) stated:

> A protracted meeting begins at Pleasant View Church this evening. There is plenty of raw material hereabouts for revival work, and perhaps some former jobs in that line will bear redressing and working over again.

In 1872 a Methodist Protestant group was organized in the eastern part of the Township and in 1876 Mrs. Wm. Opdyke helped organize a church in the village of Witt.

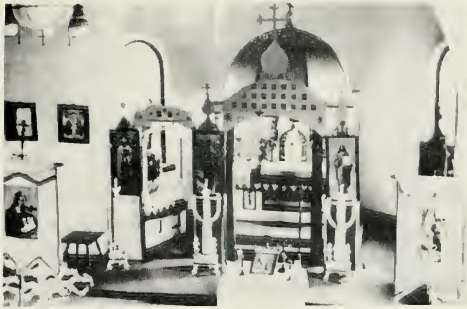
In 1895, Pleasant View Church was brought within the village limits and the congregation united.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized in 1873 by Wm. McDavid. Among the early members were: The Lohrs, Marks, Updykes, Strains, Shupings, Bolts, Bartons and Bentz.

Two nearby country churches had many Witt Township members.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized in 1842. Among the early members were: Henry Carriker, Mary Carriker, Tillman Hefley, Nancy Lipe, John Lipe, and Rachel Lipe.

Just across the road in Fillmore Township the Primitive Baptists held Sunday School and Church in a school house in the northeast corner of Section 5. Later an interdenominational church called Woodside was built. Among Witt Township members were: Granthams, Henry Settle, R. T. Sturgeon, John Pyatt, Gladys Smith, Robert Moxey, Helen Wright, Luwanda Friese, Dale Houck, Wayne Knodle, Dow Alexander, and Archie Friese. A new church was dedicated in 1962.



Interior of Greek Orthodox Church

In early 1900's the Roman Catholic Church was in charge of Father Mee.

The Greek Catholics built a church valued at $14,000 and had a membership of eighty families.

In later years the Christian Church bought the land upon which the Greek Catholic Church had stood and erected a frame building.

The Bethel Assembly of God Church was erected across from the Parkview school but has had no minister the last few years.

The Plymouth Brothers, a congregation without a resident minister, meet in East Witt.

George Paisley donated an 1100 pound bell to the Methodist Church in 1895. Since they did not use it on their new building on Second Street, it was sold to the Greek Catholic Church.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

WITT CREAMERY CO.

In 1910 The Witt Creamery Co. was organized and occupied a building on Talmadge St. just north of the present location of Miller's Filling Station. Shares of stock were owned by Dr. Chas. Walcher, Fesser Brothers, F. W. Pfertner, Stauder & Hoehn, Carriker & Maxey, Walter Pyle, Sam Lee, Anton Avena, W. S. Baxter, Robt. Dixon, C. H. Lockhart and P. W. Young.

The officers of the company were: President, Dixon; Treasurer, Lockhart; Secretary, Carriker.

For Commissioners to these three were added: Maxey, Henry Fesser and Baxter.

The employees were: Fletcher Rhodes, Lester Carriker and Ed Chinn.

The capital stock was valued at $3,000.00 and the first year's operation resulted in a net loss of $800. The company had a very short life.

Every town had a brick-yard whose kilns provided bricks for store fronts, foundations and chimneys.

The Oland Brick and Tile Company of Witt was founded in 1906 by Alonzo Betty and Fred Mitchell. The managers were C. Strausbough and J. Wilson. Their two kilns, of the "down draft" variety as shown by the four chimneys, were on the southeast edge of Witt along today's Route 16. The highway now passes between the location of the kilns and the clay-pit which is now the pond on the land of J. P. Marks.

Oland Brick and Tile Company

Clay was dug by hand from the pit, loaded into buckets, pulled by cables to the mixing vat. The resultant batter was pressed into a tube the width and thickness of a brick, then pushed under a wheel with piano-wire "knives" that cut the green bricks the proper length.

The wet bricks were placed on trays and wheeled over wooden rails to the drying sheds. They were then placed on standards and piled in criss-cross rows so that air could circulate around them.

When dried they were taken to the kiln and piled up again.

Eight openings were provided through which coal was shoveled and fires were kept going 24 hours a day until the bricks were the proper hardness as shown by the color.

With some of the first bricks made Alonzo Betty built for his son, W. E. Betty, as a wedding present the house in which Mrs. Betty now resides.

The Witt Press was launched March 10, 1905, by W. P. Hagthrop who at that time was also publisher and owner of the Nokomis Progress. In 1908 Mr. Hagthrop sold the Progress and devoted his time and energy to the Witt Press which proved very successful.

The paper owned its own building on Broadway.

In the after-war slump of the 20's the paper discontinued.

In the picture of the Witt Press Office (1914) appear: Wm. Bolling, Jos. Mitchell, Bertha Brummet, and W. P. Hagthrop.

THE WITT PRESS

CLUBS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Lodge Hall above corner building on Broadway.

Lodge interest in Witt Township was represented in early days by the Grange. Grange No. 128 was headed by John Dees in 1873. Olive Branch No. 547 was headed by John Neisler in the 80's. I. T. Towell was secretary.

Modern Woodman Camp 5628 was organized in 1900 with a membership of more than 100. It remains as an insurance.

I.O.O.F. No. 943 in early 1900's had more than 50 members. The last member, Eugene Shelton, transferred to state membership in 1960. Sunflower Rebekah Lodge 691 held regular meetings until four years ago.

Knights of Pythias and Pythian Sisters are now extinct.

I.O.R.M. were organized in early 1900's but has now united with a lodge in eastern Illinois. The Daughters of Pocahontas remain active.

The Witt Unit of the Montgomery Co. Home Bureau was one of 15 formed in 1936. Meetings are held in homes of members. Clara and Florence Speiser remain of the charter members.

The American Legion and Legion Auxiliary were formed at the end of World War I. They own the Legion Hall on Broadway.

The Slovene Fraternal Lodge met for years on Sundays in the building adjacent to Frank Korbar's Tavern on Broadway. They remain as an insurance and benefit organization.

The Lions Club was organized in Witt in the spring of 1960. The Nokomis Lions Club sponsored the Witt Club. The Lions have been very active and through their efforts many things have been accomplished. A drinking fountain was installed on the main street—land was bought and cleared for a park. The park has a baseball diamond, a lighted tennis court, a variety of playground equipment, an open pavilion and a park house that is used for many meetings and social

(Continued on page 22)

ONTBROS
ONTBROS

"LABOR DAY"
OF M.E. CHURCH, Witt, Ill. SEP. 1 '09

functions. The Lions also erected a medical building using money that was loaned by interested persons in the community and elsewhere. The club also sponsors an Easter egg hunt and a Halloween parade for the children of the community.

East End (Barnsley) English Women's Red Cross before 1917.

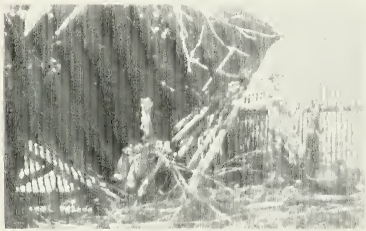
During World War I Witt had an active Red Cross that made our quota of knitted helmets, socks, sweaters and wristlets; sewed hospital gowns, clothes for French and Belgian refugees; made quilts and comforters.

The Junior Red Cross cut gun wipes of flannelette, collected peach seeds, made baby blankets and layettes.

The sewing was in charge of Mrs. Chas. Fesser and Emma Meyer.

The East End English women before the U.S. entered the war made hospital dressings, sewed and knitted for the British Army.

American Legion enroute to Cemetery, Memorial Day, 1920.



Storm Damage, April, 1925.

Sam Lee and sons, Earl, in front seat with father, Harold, Mrs. Lee, and visitors in back (1908).

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In 1892 Jos. Eddington, Sr., removed barbed wire fence from around the Brown Family Cemetery in Section 19 on East Fork Creek, doubtless on land of the homestead of Jas. or David Brown. There were scraps of 4 or 5 headstones. The remains were dug up and re-interred in Irving Cemetery.

The new Town and City of Witt had many excellent musicians who formed bands and church orchestras.

When the Miners Locals and Merchants decided to hold Labor Day celebrations, beginning in the year 1906, the Redman Band under the leadership of Tom Crane, had been organized and had played for church ice cream suppers and other local functions. Music, therefore, could be provided by local talent. Members of the Band were: Ernest Hutchins, Wm. Rushford, Tom Perry, Geo. Rochelle, Henry Devlin, Tom Devlin, Alf. Dudley, Powell Drennan, Wm. Lowe, Wm. Perry, Geo. Rushford, Jas. Shannon, Bert Taylor, Geo. Spitz, Dwight Lyerla, A. Faletti, John Buchko, I. Zucco and Tom Lindsay.

When the band was reorganized as the Excelsior Band in 1914, many younger men were old enough to join, among whom were: Tom Beasley, Wm. Conway, Harold Lee, Earl Lee, Arthur Beasley, Frank Beasley, Joe Holler, Adam Geletko, Harry Harston, Joe Fowler, Malcom Beasley, Bert Powis, Fred Goulden and W. Bolton. Tom Crane remained as leader. Saturday evening concerts made that time a festive occasion.

After 1919 the band was again reorganized as the County American Legion Band.

Music for Labor Days was furnished by our own band, food by stands conducted by church or lodge groups or individuals.

Amateur groups gave most of the entertainment but plane stunt shows, and plane rides were also given.

Street carnivals spent a week in town.

As today in the Lions' revival of the celebration the parade was a feature. Prizes were given for floats and for decorated automobiles. The floats were not as elaborate as those of today and were horse drawn.

The Japanese Human Fly was an example of outside talent. He climbed up rope to the top of newly constructed City Hall and carried Japanese and American Flags as he crossed a tight rope across Broadway from the City Hall to Marine Building.

Bandstand in which Redman Band, Excelsior Band and American Legion Band played Saturday concerts sponsored by the merchants from 1900-1940's stood at intersection of Broadway and Second Street.

"How have the mighty fallen." Today it is a shed in yard of Bob Durbin.

Drug Store of Dr. Burns who came to Witt in 1908.

Dr. Lockhart's Journal for the year 1900 was rescued from a scrap heap when his home was sold in the 1960's and shows that a Doctor was a Jack-of-all-medical-and-near-medical-trades.

The Doctor's records show that he tested eyes, fitted and sold 47 pairs of "spectacles" during the year for a total of $214.50.

Dues for ordinary services were $1 per month for a family. One person .50c.

Most items for office calls simply record Med. for sums from 5c to $1. For some reason at times the name of the medicine is specified Linseed meal poultices 10c, sulfonal 25c, Elix. Malto 50c, Iodine 25c, Cocoane 25c, Hg. powder 25c, Chlor. 25c, Resinol 50c, Vaccine 75c, Paragoric 10c, Saline Laxative 50c, Worm powder 10c, Hair tonic 25c, Salve 25c, Quinine 25c, Mustard plasters 10c.

Wild hairs were pulled for 50c. Teeth were extracted for 25c and some brave patients had 6 pulled at one setting. Boils were lanced for 50c and broken bones set for $1 including cost of splints and bandages.

One patient received medicine and "coin" for a charge of 75c. One borrowed 25c. One item "advice" 25c. Telephones were not common and calls were made from the office for 10c.

Physical exams are recorded for more than 30 applicants for the Modern Woodman Lodge insurance for $1.25 each.

Until July 1 the birth of a child set the parents back $8 financially but after July 1, $10. There are no records of fees for prenatal care—they must have been included in the one fee.

House visits were $1 regardless of the length of the call. One is recorded as "visit" two and one-half hours, $1. Another, 8 hours, $1. Splints and bandages for injuries were extra but medicines seem to have been included.

New medical gadgets were tried. One patient ordered an electric belt, $20, batteries for same, 10c each.

His office in "Chance" was over a store across the track from where Martin's Elevator is today.

There is one record of payment for rent: "To W. A. Shuping July 1—$21 to September 1."

The office was open Sundays and holidays as well as usual office days. Many called several times a day—perhaps the old and lonely.

His office was heated by a coal stove for which a patient often provided fuel at 25c a bucket. Old timers tell me this patient probably picked the coal up from the railroad tracks where it had fallen from passing coal cars.

Sometimes the doctor gave his patients credit for wood at $2 per load, or for plowing

50c (time unspecified) or "sks of fodder" for the horse that pulled his buggy. One item—"Hay for horse $5.70—milk for doctor $3.40."

In 1901 the Village Board gave him permission to ride his bicycle on the sidewalks—bumpy wooden ones.

He was a wonderful man—so beloved by our people that a larger percentage of boys from Witt have chosen his profession than from surrounding towns.

He served as a member of the City Council, Mayor and President of the Board of Education. He did not believe in long discourse. Perhaps his most famous speech was made when he presented diplomas to a graduating class: "Only God and I knew what my speech was to have been tonight. I hope that He now knows for I do not." The diplomas were handed out without the usual bombastic platitudes.

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Throughout its early history, Witt was largely sustained by services provided to farmers of the township. These agricultural pioneers were beset by problems.

Our first settlers came from wooded areas and did not feel at home in exposed prairies. Pioneers complained that prairies did not provide enough timber for the customary stake and rider fences. Part of the complaints were due to a feeling that away from the familiar woods the settler was more exposed to Indian attacks.

The Black Hawk War came in the period of our early settlement and James Brown—one of the two first settlers in our township—fought in Captain Boone's Company of volunteers.

For the brave souls who ventured out of woodland shelter into the plains, fencing was provided economically by Osage Orange Hedge. The plants were often in short supply.

Settlements were made near streams which provided transportation. The first road to Nokomis was made in 1838.

Our first settlers built cabins near East Fork Creek. In mid 1830 an epidemic, probably of milk sickness, was blamed on the water supply, old cabins were deserted, new ones built in the prairie, new lands cultivated and wells dug.

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The first Witt Orchestra organized in 1913 included: Prof. Enlow, Harry Tonks, Rex Pullen, Bert Powis, Tom Beasley, Ben Hadley, Frank Beasley, Wm. Conway, T. C. Timmons and Joe Fowler.

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In an advertisement for the sale of lots in Witt, Editor Jones of The Hillsboro Democrat, Sept. 16, 1869, quotes Thomas Hood:

"Wit bought is better than Wit taught." The editor seemed to take pleasure in the fact that Wood thought himself outwitted.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Left to right, standing, Prof. W. A. Green, School Principal, Babe Schievenin, Russell Seletto, Frank Korbar, P. Schirini, John Bensko, John Maurer, Coach Kirkpatrick;

Seated, first team, Buster Coulson, Paul Chervinko, Al Hanisko, George Chervinko, Charles Nuehs.

The team won third place in the state tournament in 1928.

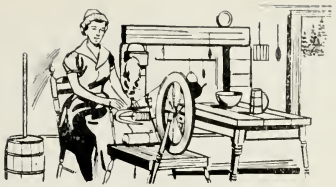
CABELLO'S BAKERY — 1908

The name OLAND appears over and over—Oland Nat. Bank, Oland Brick & Tile Co., Oland Park Addition, in names given by Betty and Mitchell. A. A. Betty had a son, Milo Oland, who died at the age of 6.

CARRIKER'S STORE — 1906

Peabody Mine of Witt (No. 12) employed 581 men in 1915, worked 92 days, produced 265,342 tons of coal.

In 1915 the following from Witt passed the state examination for Mine Managers: Robt. Merry, O. O. Larrick, Thos. Hunter, Jas. Dubois and Wm. T. Haywood.



FAMILIES OF WITT

Within this section of this historical document are listed the families of this community. Many no longer reside in Witt but their attachment and mark is still here.

Into this melting pot came the English, Greeks, Italians, Slovaks, Poles, Germans, Yugoslavs, Irish, Lithuanians, Scandanavians, Dutch, Spanish, Russians, Hungarians, French, Scotch, Austrians and many more. Many of the family names still betray their origin. Here they made their home.

This history does by no means include them all. For those that made their mark and are not included, we apologize.

Aerial View

of Witt

1968

Looking Southwest

With School In Center

HENRY ERNST FAMILY

Henry Ernst was born near Belleville, Illinois in 1866. When 13 years old he came to Montgomery County with his parents. He moved to Witt in 1901. He bought interest in Paisley Mill & Elevator. He sold to C. P. Zimmer in 1933. Ernst & Short also operated a lumber company from 1910 to 1917.

Mr. Ernst was active in business. He was a director of Security National Bank, Supervisor of Witt Township, and in 1905 he helped found St. Barbara's Church.

In 1892 he married Amelia Hoehn, daughter of Ben Hoehn. They had five children: Anna (Mrs. Henry Holthaus) died in 1932; Carl owns and operates Ernst Garage; Olivia (Mrs. Joe Hauptman) lives in Wood River; Irene (Mrs. Louis Spinner) lives in Springfield; Tillie (Mrs. Joe Chervinko) lives in Witt and is employed at Security National Bank.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Ernst died in 1945.

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PAISLEY G. BOURKE FAMILY

Paisley Bourke was born in Witt, Illinois February 15, 1901 and died March 23, 1968. He was the youngest of 9 children of Andrew and Mary (Kennedy) Bourke and came to Witt from Ireland in the late 1800's to work in the mine.

He attended Witt Schools and at the age of 16 began working in the Witt mine. He continued working in coal mines in Montgomery County. At the closing of the Coalton mine he went to O'Fallon mine until his retirement in 1958.

On February 2, 1924, he married Estelle Lipe, daughter of Albert and Clara (Dillingham) Lipe of Hillsboro, at the Witt Methodist Parsonage. They became the parents of six children. The oldest son, George, married Betty Highfill of Jacksonville. They had one daughter, Patty Ann. George was killed in an automobile accident in 1953.

Mary married Keith Fath of Litchfield and they live in Witt.

Tillie married James Moody of Hillsboro and lives in Springfield, Illinois. They have five children, Sally, Mary, Jimmy, Terry and Kathleen. One son is deceased.

Billie is married to Roy Botts and lives in Springfield. She has two sons, Bruce and Eddie Page.

Tommy married Ruby Smith of Hillsboro and lives in Alton, Illinois. He has three daughters, Tena, Tammy and Teresa.

Clarence "Butch" married Barbara Crow of Nokomis and lives in Witt. They have two children, Billy and Penny Sue.

He has a sister, Matilda (Bourke) McManamy who lives in Sunland, California, and a brother, Tom, who lives in Canton, Illinois.

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ROSEMARY (STAUDER) EHRLICH

Rosemary (Stauder) Ehrlich graduated from Witt High School, class president in 1943. Was employed by Indiana Bell Telephone Co for four years before marrying Ray L. Ehrlich, co-owner of Superior Electric Co. Now makes her home at 2318 Lanewood Dr., Muncie, Ind., with husband and children, Barbara Ann, Joseph Raymond, Susan Mary, Mark Steven and Karen Denise. Is member St. Lawrence Altar and Rosary Society, Daughters of Isabella, Knights Wives and Delta Zeta Colonnade Club at Ball State University.

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In Memory Of
MICHAEL & ANNIE CHARNISKY
(1875-1917) (1875-1957)
By Family
Joseph, Steve, Helen, Cecelia, Andy and
Michael of Chicago
Mary of Michigan City, Indiana
Annie of Springfield, Illinois

C. L. ARMENTROUT FAMILY

The Armentrout family came to America in 1739 on the English sailing ship, Samuel. The family that arrived and landed at Philadelphia in August that year nearly two and a quarter centuries ago consisted of a widow, Anna Elizabeth Ermentraudt and seven children. One of her sons was Christopher Ermentraudt (married to Susanna Power). One of their sons was Henry Ermentraudt, who was the father of Christopher H. Armentrout. He was born in Hardy County, Virginia, in 1797, and came to Illinois in a covered wagon, with his wife and children in 1839. He bought a small farm and built a log cabin in Section 17 of what is now Witt township. In 1846 he dug a well on an adjoining section and built a two-story home there.

John Taylor Armentrout, one of his sons, was a prominent man in civic affairs in his community. He was born on this same farm and was married to Rebecca Ann Vermilion. After their marriage they settled on this farm and continued there until his death in 1887. His wife lived there until her second marriage to Fred Mitchell. Their son, Clarence L. Armentrout was born in 1872, and was married to Ida Towell in 1893. They located on a farm in section 7, Witt township, where they lived until 1903, and in that year came to the Armentrout homestead, which was their home until his death in 1925.

The homestead is now owned by John Thomas Armentrout, having been in the family four generations.

The children of C. L. and Ida (Towell) Armentrout are Inez (Mrs. Chester Cunningham) of Plainfield, Indiana, who has six children, namely, Clarice (Lombardi) of California, Ray of Indiana, Wesley, who died in 1967, Melvin of Indiana, Dale of Tennessee, and Elsie (Hand) of Indiana. There are 17 grandchildren. Leslie of Witt (married Mary Thumb) has one child, Rosemary (Ivie) of St. Louis, Mo. There is one grandchild. John of Witt (married Myrtle Eddington) has three children, Lavonne (Clayton) of Witt, Imogene (Durbin) of Witt, and Juanita (Casebier) of Missouri. There are 13 grandchildren. Lethia (Mrs. Francis Nagle) of Kankakee, who has three children, June (Saatkamp) of Alma, Ill., Betty (Webb) of Kankakee and Don Eddington of Decatur. There are seven grandchildren. Dorothy (Mrs. Robert Rengel) of Bloomington, Ill., has three children, Gary, of Peoria, Judith (Barling) of Bloomington, Ill., and Jean (Stephens) of Hudson, Ill. There are seven grandchildren. Velma (Mrs. Carl Moffat) of Dallas, Texas, has two sons, Robert of Florida and David of Dallas, Texas. There is one grandchild.

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MILLER-SCHNEIDER FAMILY

William Miller came to Witt Twp. in 1889, married Katharine Schwartz, daughter of John and Kate Schwartz. They were parents of 3 sons, Blazius, John and Emil. Because of the death of their mother in 1899, they were raised by their grandmother. John, a farmer, married Fannie Mindurp in 1920. They were the parents of 4 children, Harold, the oldest, married Ruby Schneider, the daughter of Alva J. Schneider, who with his wife and 2 daughters came to Illinois from Southern Indiana in 1931, living near Irving until 1939 when they moved to a farm near Witt. Mrs. Schneider passed away in 1943. Mr. Schneider lives with the Harold Millers who are the parents of Larry, Patsy, Roger and James. His other daughter, Evelyn, wife of Clement Stauder of Nokomis, has 2 children, Louis and Barbara. Other children of John and Fannie Miller are, Ruby, wife of Wendell Egelhoff of Raymond, daughters, Judy and Connie. Wilma Jean, wife of Ed Pilgrim of East Alton, children, Deborah, Linda and Eddie, and Marilyn, wife of Henry Snoddy of Hillsboro, sons, Johnny and Ronnie.

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CONGRATULATIONS

ON YOUR

CENTENNIAL

PAULINE (BRONZA) BUNTEN

JOHN MARTIN FAMILY

John Martin (1965-1941), one of a family of nine children of William and Susan (Crosser) Martin, was born in Portsmouth, Ohio. The family came to Illinois by covered wagon and settled in Effingham county.

On February 11, 1889, he was married to Lillie May Bowlby (1866-1946), daughter of George and Xenia (Buckingham) Bowlby, residents of Olney, Illinois.

They purchased the George Paisley farm ½ mile southwest of Paisley (now Witt) in 1903 and moved in the spring of 1904. They were parents of five children: Zora R. (1889-1957), Florence E. (1891), Charles A. (1895), Ethel L. (1897-1968), and George W. (1906-1908).

In 1908, Zora married Edwin F. Bates (1882-1962) of Witt Illinois. They had five children: Doris G. (1910), Robert L. (1912), Roberta L. (1912-1916), and twins (1915) who died in infancy. Robert married Mercedes Butler, deceased. In 1951, Robert married Veronica M. Potsic (1918) of Witt, Illinois. They have one son, Thomas Leroy (1953).

In 1912, Florence married Phil F. Speiser (1886) of Witt, Illinois. They were the parents of three children: Paul E. (1919), Wilma L. (1922-1927), and John W. (1923). In 1947, Paul married Wanda G. Hinton (1923) of Nokomis Illinois. They were the parents of four children: Rae Lynn (1948), Paul Kent (1950), Bette Ann (1952), who died in infancy, and Connie Mae (1955). In 1946, John married J. Ruth Hines (1925) of Nokomis, Illinois. They have two children: Ruth Ann (1947) and John Philip (1948). In 1967, John P. married Connee Sue Cain (1947) of Nokomis, Illinois. They have a daughter, Stephanie Ann (1967).

In 1916, Charles married Goldie Wade (1894-1953) of Pawnee, Illinois. They had four children: Glenn W. (1917), Kenneth R. (1920), LeRoy M. (1924), and Martha Marie (1927). In 1955, Charles married Bessie I. King (1903) of Springfield, Illinois. Glenn married Roberta Zepp (deceased). In 1949, he married Mary Jane Bates (1926) of Owaneco, Illinois. They have three children: George Edward (1953), Frank Glenn (1958), and Nancy Jane (1964). In 1944, Kenneth married Doris M. Grimes (1923) of Nokomis, Illinois. They have four children: Jerry Ray (1946), Randy Wade (1949), Karla Mae (1951), and Lorna Lee (1955). In 1946, LeRoy married Audrey A. Ryan (1926) of Owaneco, Illinois. They have six children: Edward LaMar (1948), Suzanne Marie (1950), Deborah Kay (1951), James Ryan (1953), Jeffrey Charles (1955), and Jay L. (1958). In 1967, Edward married Carole Lapsansky (1947) of Witt, Illinois. They have one daughter, Schelli Anne (1967). In 1954 Martha married Clarence W. Barnstable (1928) of Nokomis, Illinois. They are the parents of three children: Barbara Bea (1955), Kay Marie (1957), and Robert Wilson (1962), who died in infancy.

In 1919 Ethel married Charles Jones (1896) of Witt, Illinois. They had two children: Lily Mae (1920) and Charles W. (1924-1948). In 1939, Lily Mae married George D. Sample (1917) of Witt, Illinois. They have two children: Charles Edward (1953) and Lenore Ruth (1957). In 1944, Charles W. married Catherine M. Gensini (1924) of Nokomis, Illinois. They had one son, Michael J. (1946), who married Jane E. Smith (1946) of Witt, Illinois in 1966.

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CONGRATULATIONS

TOM AND GILDA ROSKO

JOHN WILLIAMSON FAMILY

At the turn of this century a young Scotsman, John (Joke) Williamson, came to the small community of Witt, Illinois. He worked in the coal mines and became active in the United Mine Workers' Union. He then became a policeman for Witt. In 1908, he decided to get married and chose Witt as his permanent residence. The original poem written by the reporter of The Witt Press, the late Kate Whitnack(pictures this event better than any other statements to that effect.

TO OUR COPPER

In the little town of Bonnybridge
Across the ocean wide,
A little romance started
Which won our "Cop" a bride.

John had been quite restless
In about two weeks before.
The ship that was to bring his prize
Had landed on the shore.

Last Tuesday when the 2:16
Had just got to the station,
He waved his "Billy" back and forth
As if he owned a nation.

Of course we couldn't understand
'Till the lass got off the train.

We welcome Mrs. Williamson
From across the ocean wide.
And compliment our "Coppie"
In winning such a bonny bride.

Mr. Williamson was for many years on the Police Force in Witt, where he lived until his death in 1959. He is well remembered by all. The 9:00 P. M. curfew sent many of the youth at that time on their way home each evening with a warning to others. Truants from school will always remember the "Rock Pile" near the Old Mine. They soon learned that it really was easier to go to school and much more pleasant.

He served on the local school board as a member and also as president for many years. He always showed an interest in the young people of the community and kept in touch with many after they left Witt to take up residence in other cities.

Mrs. Williamson is still living in Witt, Illinois, at the family residence on Middleton Street. With the exception of a few months after their marriage, the Williamsons lived in this same residence. This place is still home to the children who try to visit their mother as often as possible.

The four children of the Williamson family are as follows: Dr. Beulah Chervinko, Chicago, who is a teacher in the Chicago Public High Schools. She married George Chervinko of the famous Speed-Boys Basketball team of 1928. George spent much time during his illness at the family residence. He passed away in November 1966.

David Williamson, St. Louis, is manager of Monsanto Employees' Cafeteria. He has one daughter, Marie Eleana, who graduated from the University of Missouri in June 1967, and was married the following week. She is now teaching Physical Education at Affton High School, Affton, Mo.

James Williamson, St. Louis, is supervisor of Food Service Corporation, and presently employed at Missouri Baptist Hospital. He has four children. Margaret and Lynn are married, Richard works at Famous-Barr Food Service, and Robert was recently discharged from the U. S. Marines.

Jack Williamson, Long Beach, California, is retired from the Coast Guard and is pursuing higher education. His one son, Bruce, is married, working, and continuing his college education. He has one son. Scot Dell Williamson. This is the first and only great-grandchild in the family and according to Jack "el mejor del mundo".

ROBERT BAIRD FAMILY

Robert Baird came to Witt in 1910 from Hamelton, Lanarkshire, Scotland. His wife, Mary (Gilmour) Baird, came the following year with Euphemia (1909), and Jeanie (1911). They first lived at the corner of Allen and Main St., where Peter was born (1912). Robert Baird built a home in Jones' addition (now Allen St.) where Margaret (1913) and Mary (1915) were born. Mrs. Mary Baird died in 1957 and Mr. Baird in 1962.

Euphemia (Mrs. Arthur Ruckle) of St. Louis died in 1962. She had three children: Robert Baird (married Pat Masgon) father of Pam and Jon, of Witt; Margaret (Mrs. Art. Sandy) mother of seven children of Flint, Mich.; Janet (Mrs. Robt. Brewer) mother of eight children of Granite City. The son Peter died in 1966. Jeanie Baird is single, lives in Chicago. Margaret (Mrs. Urban Calame) of near Witt has two daughters: Carol (Mrs. Wm. Lee) mother of Richard, of Nokomis; and Marilyn (Mrs. Larry Reynolds) mother of Ray and Joan, of Irving. Mary (Mrs. Everett Shelton) of Witt has two children, Janet (Mrs. Alan Janssen) mother of Marilyn, Paula and Gail of Morrisonville, and George (married Joyce Thomas) father of Steven of Witt.

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RALPH THUMB FAMILY

Ralph Thumb (1871-1958) son of Marvin and Sarah (Cross) Thumb, born in Witt township. He was educated at the Pleasant Hill School. His father donated the land on which the school was built. He was a dairy farmer, owning two farms in the Witt community. In Jan. 1898 he was married to Emma Lipe (1877-1930) daughter of John S. and Catherine (Weller) Lipe. To this union two daughters were born. Mabel (1899-1965) wife of Harvey Eddington and Mary, wife of Leslie Armentrout. The Eddingtons were parents of two daughters: Margery, wife of Robert Manuell of Indianapolis, Ind., and they have three children, Donald, David and DeeAnn; and June wife of Thomas Zak of Sacramento, Calif., and they have one son, Dennis. The Armentrouts have one daughters, Rosemary, wife of Eddie Ivie of St. Louis, Mo., and they have one daughter, Lynda Sue. The Armentrouts are presently residing on the home place.

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LOWE FAMILY

Arthur Lewis Lowe, 1882-1936
and
Stella (Baxter) Lowe, 1884-1957

Children

1. Zelma Baxter Lowe, 1906-
   (Mrs. Willis Adams) 1938
   Children
   Phillip, 1943; Kenneth, 1945
2. Arthur David Lowe, 1913-
   Children
   David, Donald, Sharon
3. Mildred Louise Lowe, 1920-
   (Mrs. Grant Gower) 1938
   Children
   Paul, Rebecca, Timothy, Steve, David

Great Grandchildren

1. Kathy; 2. Betty; 3. Debra Lowe
4. Todd McGowan;
5. Susanne Michelle Adams

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JOHN AND JOSEPHINE KARICH

John, born Yugoslavia Dec. 1880, died Sept. 8, 1953, at Witt, Ill. Came to U. S. 1904, to Ill. 1909. Josephine, born in Yugoslavia Oct. 1889. Came to U. C. in 1913. Gave birth to three children. Josephine, born 1914, lived 3 weeks. Justine, lives in Mattoon, Ill. Hedwie lives in Arvada, Colo. Mrs. Karich has 5 grandchildren. John and Josephine were married 40 years and 1 day at the time of his death.

THE BATTLES FAMILY

Thomas Stevenson Battles was born in Philadelphia, Pa., in 1803. He married Susan Snowden of Philadelphia; her mother's name was West, a relative of the famous Quaker painter.

They were the parents of three children, William, Thomas and Johnston. They moved to Ohio in 1833. The mother died soon after.

Thomas and second wife came to Illinois in 1861 and bought a farm 6 miles south of Nokomis. It is now owned by the Uzzel family and occupied by Roy Ernest.. He paid for it with gold which he carried in his belt around his waist. He was preacher of a Methodist Church known as Prairie Chapel, located near the property now owned by Mrs. Hand in Witt Township. He died in 1900 at the age of 97.

A son Johnson and his family of 9 children came to Illinois from Ohio, bought a farm in 1873, 4½ miles south of Nokomis in Witt township. It has since been owned by Ben Battles and Earl Battles, is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Zupanci.

A son, Ben Battles, was born in 1866, married Rhoda Ransdell in 1890. They lived on a farm 4½ miles east of Witt, across the road from Prairie College School, since owned by Ed Battles and Harold Battles. She died in 1932 and he died in 1937. They were the parents of three sons. Earl of Calif., Lester of Centralia, Ill., Ed died in 1963.

Willard Battles another son of Johnston. was born in 1862. He married Eliza Olive Ransdal in 1887. They lived on a farm 4 miles east of Witt joining the Ben Battles farm. He died in 1891 and she died in 1951.

They were the parents of 3 children, Mabel, who died in 1908, Ross of Calif., and Lucy, wife of Lester Wittnam, now living on the farm. They are the parents of 2 children, Mrs. Merle Berns of Nokomis and Mrs. Geraldine Holloway of Witt.

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THE HINES FAMILY

Thomas E. Hines and Miss Jessie Randle were married April 26, 1911. They lived in the Witt-Nokomis area all their lives. Mr. Hines passed away Oct. 8, 1966. They have the following children:

Randle Hines of Alton; Doris (Mrs. Jack Toberman) died in 1965; Raymond, died in 1915; C. L. "Shorty" Hines of East St. Louis; Marcella (Mrs. Roy Sullivan) of Morrisonville; Paul Hines of Witt; Alice (Mrs. Marion O'Malley) of Fillmore; Ruth (Mrs. John Speiser; and Marilyn (Mrs. Melvin Chambers), both of Witt. There are 12 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

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CORA Z. LIPE

Among the early settlers of Montgomery County were John and Rachel Lipe, who arrived here from Cabarries County, North Carolina, in November 1831. They settled in the area of St. John Church, five miles west of Witt. They were the parents of thirteen children, most of whom settled in the same area. John gave land for the Church and Cemetery. One of their sons was Wiley Lipe, the father of Carrie Lipe Gardnes and Cora Z. Lipe, the latter of whom has lived her entire life in and around Witt. She received her early education in Irving, Hillsboro, Carthage College and later received her master's degree from the University of Illinois.

Cora Lipe taught two years in the rural schools between high school and college education and then after receiving her college education spent forty-five years teaching all in Montgomery County. The last forty were in the Witt Schools. She is a member of the Methodist Church, Delta Kappa Gamma, and has been active in those organizations and other community work, especially the Witt Memorial Library. She retired in 1957 and continues her life in her home in Witt.

GEORGE POWIS FAMILY

George Powis, his wife, Patience M. Powis, and two children, Walter and Frank, came to this country in 1886. They settled at LaSalle, Ill. Frank died in 1888. They came to Witt in 1889. They were the parents of 10 children. They lived in the Whitmore log house, now Vine St. They built their house in 1901 (now the corner of North St. and Raymon Ave.). Mr. Powis worked in the mine, was active in lodge and civic projects.

Mr. Powis, born May 27, 1861, at Wolverhampton, England, died Jan. 3, 1946. Mrs. Powis, born May 5, 1865, at Faisley, England, died April 25, 1958. A daughter, Grace, died April 27, 1918, after teaching one year at Paisley School.

A son, Ross, died Dec. 19, 1948, at Lansing, Mich. leaving 2 children: Richard (father of Vic, Van and Angela) and Mrs. Betty Nolan (mother of Bruce and Dawn) all of Lansing.

A son, Carl Powis, died Aug. 11, 1958, leaving one child, Mrs. Margorie Hargrave (mother of Edward and Robbie, grandmother of Delores), all of Witt.

A son, Walter Powis, lives in Peoria, Ill. His daughter, Virginia, Mrs. Floyd Braye, (mother of Sheryl of Raymond and Brian. Sgt. Brian Braye served in England and Spain).

A son, Ernest Powis, has 3 children: Russell died May 13, 1918; Mrs. Josephine Baughman (mother of Berthram) died Jan. 1948; Mrs. Laura Smith (mother of Donald, Michael, Robert, Brian); Vernon Powis, whose children are Vernon Jr., of Mt. Pleasant, Mich. and Mrs. Susan Ward (mother of Jeffery) of Saganaw, Mich.

A son, Albert Powis, was in WW I April 1917 to Aug. 1919, arrived in France in June, 1917, served in 5 major and 3 defensive battles, hiked up the Rhu River Valley to Germany. He received the Nurdun Medal, the Furrigare, the Crot, the Guerre, with 5 citations, serving with the 66 Co. 1 Batt. 5th Marines Belgium, Luxenburg, Germany. His son is Major Albert (Teddy) Powis, Jr. of Lansing, Mich. (father of Connie. Winnie, Tom, Jeff and Marilyn).

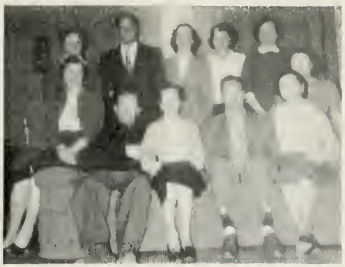
A daughter, Mrs. Mary L. Costa of Dartmouth, Mass., has a daughter, Mrs. Chaunda Baier, and grandaughter, Kathy, of Liverton, Mass.

A son, Leslie Powis, of Central Valley, Calif., has four children: Arlene, born 1937, died 1941 in Michigan; Mrs. Doris Schoenberg (mother of Daniel, Michael, Timothy) of Past Falls, Idaho; a son, Raymond Powis, of China Lake, Calif.; a son, Ray Edward, and daughter, Kare Lynn, of Spokane, Wash.

A son, Bert Powis, served in WW I 5th Div. 11th Inf. Co. Hq. Band. in France and Luxenburg.

A daughter, Mrs. Ruth Shelton Black, has 4 children: Sgt. Cyril Shelton, 25 years service in the U. S. Air Force in England, France, Saude Arabia, Germany. His children are Jerilyn, Susanne, Marylee. He is now retired, living in Mascoutah, Ill.; A son, Everett Shelton, of Witt, has 2 children, George (served with the National Guard, father of Stephen) of Witt, and Mrs. Janet Janssen, mother of Marylin, Paula and Gail, of Morrisonville, Ill. A son, Major Roy Shelton, has 28 years service in Italy, Japan, Korea. Thailand. He is now working with the Army Forces Examining and Entrance Station of Oakland, Calif. His children are: Sp. 4 Tom Shelton, in service in Vietnam with 406th Transportation Corps Detachment; Mrs. Melody Webb (mother of Bobbie Russel, Jo Ann) of Keiserskaughtern, Germany; a daughter, Thelma Shelton Goldsmith, has 6 children: Sp. 4 Harry Goldsmith, Hq. Co. USAG. Fort Carson, Colo., (father of Jesse and Leslie), now living in Donnelson, Ill.; Larry Goldsmith, his child, Tracey, of Nokomis, Ill.; Mrs. Joyce Sidener, her son. Timothy, Oconee, Ill.; Jim, Linda and Wilma Goldsmith at home, Oconee, Ill.

SAMUEL PATTINSON FAMILY



Samuel Pattinson was born in Derby, England on Dec. 2, 1881. He left England as a very young man, worked his way to Canada as a meat cutter on a ship. Leaving Canada, he moved to Morrisonville, Ill. In 1905 he came to Witt and worked as a meat cutter for the coal company store. It was there he met Alma Jane Chapman, who worked there as a bookkeeper.

Alma Jane was the daughter of James Henry and Sarah Chapman. She was born on a farm northwest of Witt on June 10, 1886. Alma's Grandfather Chapman helped organize the first Methodist Church in Witt.

One of her uncles was a minister. Johnny AppleSeed was also a relative of Alma's. He planted apple seeds through the middle west, and some of the old trees are still standing.

Alma and Sam were married in 1907 in Witt and to them eleven children were born. Two died in infancy (Mary Lue and James Dakin). The remaining nine and their children are: (Reginald) California, James, Mary Ann; (Catherine Barnick) Texas, Edward; (Dorothy Rogers) Witt; John, Karen, Ruth Ann; (Jane Dilley) Missouri, Donald; (Reba Tidwell) California, Caral, Suzanne, Sharon; (Edith Chervinko) Danville, Ill., Cynthia, Stephen; (Samuel Jr.) Texas, Madonna, Scott; (Martha Blair) Kentucky, Janet, Linda, Pamela; (Gloria Zwinak) California, Antone (deceased) Antonell, Tamara.

Sam worked as a meat cutter for Fesser Brothers and W. E. Betty for many years. In 1915 he moved his family to a small farm northwest of Witt where he ran a milk route. In 1944 they retired and moved closer in town. After retiring they took trips over the country visiting their children and grandchildren.

Samuel passed away in 1963 and Alma in 1966. They are buried at Irving, Illinois.

This quote best described Mr. and Mrs. Pattinson. "You give but little when you give of your possessions. It's when you give of yourself that you truly give."

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JOSEPH DeLUKA FAMILY

Joseph DeLuka (1872-1939) was born in Aronzo, Italy. He came to the United States in 1892 and resided in Pennsylvania until 1896 when he went to Braidwood, Illinois, and there he became a naturalized citizen on April 15, 1897. In 1899, he came to Witt, Illinois, and worked as a coal miner. The next year he sent to Italy for Miss Giovanni Zandegiacomo-Cella (1875-1919) whom he married soon after her arrival. They became the parents of eight children: Louis, Charles, Mario, Celio, Mary, Elvira, Enio and Lena.

Louis married Freda Hagemeier of Nokomis; they have four children: Eldon of Pana, William of Nokomis, Janice Fisher of Aurora, and Kathy at home.

Charles, who passed away on March 21, 1968, was married to Josephine Westbrook of Hillsboro; they have three children: Charles E. Jr. of Burlington, Wisconsin, Rose Marie Bogle of Witt, and Larry Lynn of Hillsboro.

Celio married Ruby Weller of Irving; they have two children: Leona Huber of Hillsboro and Robert of Nokomis.

Mary was married to Christian Meisenheimer who passed away March 24, 1968. She has three children: Joseph of Collinsville, Marlene Barach and Rose Marie Bickmore of Bethalto; and three step-sons: Richard, Kenneth, and Robert, of Bethalto.

Elvira, wife of Lee Wagoner of Portland, Oregon, has one son, Bruce.

Enio married Margaret Holmes of Witt, and they have three children: Don of Hillsboro, Bradley and Mary Jo at home.

Mario died in infancy and Lena died in 1951.

There are thirty-three great-grandchildren.

THE BECKHAM FAMILY

Douglas H. Beckham was born Jan. 1, 1869, oldest son of William and Julia (Lesko) Beckham of Stony Point, North Carolina. A brother, Mac, is deceased, and a sister, Hattie Harris, is still liivng at the age of 86. He came to Illinois at the age of 22, working on farms for many of the Lipes in Rountree twp. After moving to Witt he worked as butcher for Henry Grantham a short time and then for Fesser Bros. He married Maud Grantham in 1902. She was born at Irving May 22, 1875, daughter of Daniel and Melinda (Irvin). She was one of 9 children.

They had two daughters, Grace, second child, graduated from Witt school in 1924 and attended Eastern Illinois College at Charleston. She taught the term of '24- and '25 at a country school (Meadowfield), since then teaching in Witt schools, primary grade. Edna, first child, worked in Irving for one and a half years, and for Illincis Power & Light Co. at Witt for 15 years. She married Shirley Tucker and they have one daughter, Joyce, who married Lynn Shelton and they have three children, Douglas, Joe and Sheri Lyn.

Douglas died in 1952 and Maud in 1960.

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ARENA FAMILY

Pete Arena was born near Palermo, Sicily in 1877. He came to America at the age of 19 and worked in the railroads and in the coal mines in and around Witt until 1911 when he returned to Sicily to marry Rose Fasella, 1884. They returned to America and settled in Witt where they raised a family of 6 children. In 1919, the family moved to a farm in Texas, but shortly after the Rio Grande River flooded their farm, so they returned to Witt, where he continued to work in the coal mines until his retirement. Pete Arena preceded his family in death in 1946, Rose Arena in 1960. The remaining members of the Arena family are as follows: Mary Arena McEnaney, St. Louis, Mo.; Vencentia Arena, St. Louis, Mo.; Frank Arena, Fargo, North Dakota; John Arena, Whittier, Calif.; Rose Arena Voigtman, St. Louis, Mo.; Ann Arena Geletka, Burbank, Calif.

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A 100th Anniversary Salute To Our

Great Grandparents
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Houck

Grandparents
Robert and Lucinda (Houck) Dixon
Wilson and Sarah (Balsev) Maxey

Parents
John and Luelah (Dixon) Maxev

from
B. W. Maxey and Sons
John P. Maxey, James W. Maxey
and
Nina B. Maxey Campbell

FREDERICK MITCHELL FAMILY

Frederick Mitchell, son of William and Ann (Simmons) Mitchell of England, son of William and Jane (Hockey) Mitchell, was born in Somersetshire, England, Aug. 4, 1844. F. Mitchell was educated in England. Jan. 1, 1869, he married Elizabeth Durston, daughter of John and Jane Durston. They came to the U. S. and remained for a year in New York State, coming to Macoupin County, Ill. in 1870 and then to Montgomery County in 1882. Mr. Mitchell rented a farm in Witt Township, Montgomery County, 1½ mi. north of his present farm, later he bought 80 acres of this farm, to which he added 40 acres, and the town of Witt was laid out on this farm.

Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell had no children of their own, but adopted a girl and boy, children of Mrs. Mitchell's sister. The former was Mrs. Fred Adler and the latter Joseph Mitchell, both of Witt. Mrs. Mitchell died Oct. 18, 1896, age 48 years. Later he married Mrs. Rebecca Vermillion Armentrout, the widow of John Armentrout.

Mr. Mitchell united with the Presbyterian Church in 1882 and had his membership transferred to the M. E. Church of Witt in 1911, of which he was a trustee. He was a director of the Oland National Bank of Witt, founder of the Oland Brick and Tile Co., in 1906, and built the Witt Hotel.

Mr. Mitchell died Aug. 29, 1920, age 76 years.

Joseph Mitchell was born near Bristol, England, Oct. 20, 1874, son of Walter and Eliza Durston Coombes. His father and two brothers, Walter and Willie, died. He came to the U. S. in 1875 with his mother, sister and brothers and they settled near Brighton, Macoupin County, Ill. Joseph was educated in the Montgomery County schools. He farmed for 4 years, then moved to Paisley, where he owned a general store. On Jan. 26, 1896, he married Elizabeth M. Settle, daughter of John A. and Elizabeth Gallup Settle of Oconee, Ill. They had two daughters, Mildred Elizabeth and Clara Josephine, and were members of the Witt Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Mitchell died in 1924.

Joseph Mitchell was a real estate and insurance agent and served as postmaster of Witt. On Jan. 3, 1942, Mr. Mitchell and Mrs. Alma Green Blackwood were united in marriage at the Presbyterian manse in Hillsboro. She died in 1961.

Joseph Mitchell, age 85, died at his home in Schram City Nov. 20, 1959, and was the last of his immediate family. A sister, Mrs. Flora Adler, widow of Fred Adler, brother, Herbert Coombes and half-sister, Mrs. Fannie Ward, are all deceased.

Mildred E., daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth, was born July 13, 1897 and graduated from Witt High School in 1917. On May 1, 1920, she and Arthur E. Beasley of Witt were married. They had four children, Raymond J., Arthur W., Randall L. and Allegretha M. She was a member of the Witt Presbyterian Church and a talented musician. She died Feb. 26, 1928.

Raymond lives at Irving, Arthur married Eugenia Hoehn of Witt and lives in St. Louis. They have two children, Dale Eugene and Janet Sue. Randall married Virginia Rackett of East Marion, Long Island, and lives in Mattoon, Ill. They have three daughters, Beth Ann, Sue Ellyn and Nancy Jeanne. Allegretha lives in Des Plaines and married L. H. Harrelson of Washington, D. C. They have four children, Leonard H., Larry, Lon and Dawn.

Clara J. was born May 23, 1906, and graduated from Witt High School in 1925. On Dec. 28, 1926, she was united in marriage to Clarence F. Doerr of Irving at the Lutheran parsonage in Hillsboro. Rev. Ezra Keller officiated. They made their home in Kenosha for a short time, returning to Irving, where Clar-

ence started farming, in partnership, with his father.

Clarence and Clara, who farm the home place, have one daughter, Carolee J., born on Easter Sunday, April 21, 1935. They are members of the United Methodist Church of Witt.

Mrs. Doerr taught a church school class and sang in the choir. She is a substitute teacher now. She is a charter member of Homemakers Extension and a member of Eastern Star No. 771.

Carollee attended Platt and Witt Schools and graduated from Irving Grade School and Hillsboro High School. She attended MacMurray College, Jacksonville, for three years and was a music education major. She was married to Albert M. Kinsey of Flora, on May 19, 1956, in Centenary Methodist Church at Jacksonville. Mr. Kinsey is a partner and vice president of the West Addison Dev. Corp., Addison, where they make their home. They have three daughters, Kristine Elizabeth, age 11, Kathryn Suzanne, age 9, and Karyl Lyn, age 7. They are members of Good Samaritan United Methodist Church, Addison.

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THOMAS EDDINGTON FAMILY

Thomas Eddington and wife, Sophia, located on a farm south of Witt shortly after they were married Feb. 19, 1890. They were born at Shipman, Ill. Both of their parents were natives of Summersetshire, England. They spent their 57 years of married life on this farm. Sophia lived to be 85 and Thomas to be 96. They had four children, Elmer, Harvey, Charlie and Myrtle. They had 11 grandchildren, namely, Vivian, Evelyn and Kenneth of Elmer; Luella (Compton) Eddington, Margery and June of Harvey; Mabel (Thumb) Eddington, Clara Belle, Robert and Wayne of Charlie; Selma (Kelly) Eddington, Lavonne, Imogene and Juanita of John, and Myrtle Eddington Armentrout. They would now have 34 great grandchildren and 5 great great grandchildren.

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WITTNAM-EDDINGTON

Hal Wittnam, son of Frank and Sarah (Taylor) Wittnam, was born Feb. 24, 1876. He married Carrie Grantham, daughter of Jacob and Mary (Irvin) Grantham, Jan. 22, 1901.

They became parents of two sons, Walter, Oct. 4, 1904, and Rolla, Oct. 21, 1912.

Elmer Eddington, son of Thos. and Sophia Eddington, was born Oct. 28, 1890, married Luella Compton, daughter of Henry and Lilly (Sides) Compton, Nov. 11, 1914. They became parents of three children, Vivian, Oct. 3, 1915, Evelyn, Jan. 8, 1917, and Kenneth, Nov. 6, 1920.

Rolla Wittnam and Evelyn Eddington married June 2, 1934. They were parents of three children, Donald, Aug. 22, 1936, Bette Jeanne, Dec. 28, 1945, and Glen, Feb. 13, 1949. Don graduated from Witt High School in 1953, enlisted in the Army and spent 27 months in Germany. He married Karen Huddleston Dec. 27, 1959. They have two children, Dana, born Feb. 28, 1962, and Douglas, born Mar. 26, 1965. Don and Karen are both graduates of S.I.U. Don is District Sales Manager in New York City for Monsanto Co.

Glen graduated from Witt High School in 1967 and enlisted in the Navy and left for service Sept. 21, 1967. He is now stationed at Sandia Base, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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THE JOE EDDINGTON FAMILY

Born of English ancestry, Joe Eddington, Sr., and Harriet Tucker were married on June 12, 1871. Seven children were born, but only four sons survived, namely: Joe, Jesse, Harry and Grover, all of whom were farmers of Witt Township. On Feb. 23, 1904, Joe Eddington, Jr., married Minnie Groner, oldest daughter of Charles and Margaret Ann (Voils) Groner. They became parents of four children, Homer, Lynn and Lois. A son, Otis, died in infancy. Homer (deceased) married Ernestine Bauer and they are parents of one child, Eugene. Lynn married Almeda Land and they are parents of Mrs. Glenda Smoot, Gary and Kevin. Twin daughters died in infancy. Lois married William Hadley and they are parents of Mrs. Georgia Herman, Mrs. Rosalie Dodson, Martha and Keith. Joe (deceased) and Minnie Eddington operated the Mi-Edd Shelter Home in Irving for a number of years. They have nine great grandchildren.

THE TUCKER FAMILY

James and Eliza (Tratt) Tucker's home was the Tucker farm now owned by Roy Tucker. It was bought Oct. 30, 1879, but they lived in the neighborhood since 1875. Eliza was a sister of John Tratt, who owned the store before Lee's bought it. He was the same person who owned the farm that is now Broadway—then it was John Tratt's cow pasture.

Howard James Tucker was the youngest child of James and Eliza (Tratt) Tucker. He was born in Wisconsin Nov. 6, 1863. He moved from Shipman, Ill., when he was about 12 years old, and lived in Witt the rest of his life. He was street commissioner and helped plant the trees in the Witt park, also janitor at the North School as long as they had school there. He died Oct. 30, 1932. He married Lura Jane Liticker. She was born at Bost Hill on Sept. 17, 1867, left there at 13, moved to Irving, left there at 19, moved to Witt and lived there the rest of her life. She was postmistress in 1888, serving under Grover Cleveland. She died June 1, 1954. Her folks were from North Carolina—"Tarheels". Her parents were Harris and Mary Elizabeth (Barringer) Liticker. Howard and Lura Tucker were the parents of 5 children: Elma Fern, with the exception of 6 years and 8 months, has always lived in Witt. Twins Howard Shirley and Herbert Stanley—Herbert died at the age of 5 months. Shirley married Edna Beckham and they have one daughter, Joyce, who married Lynn Shelton. They have 3 children, Douglas Howard, Joseph Paul and Sheri Lyn. Shirley helped seal up the North mine. Shirley has clerked at Lee's store for 46 years and is now retired. Valleda Sandford married Inez Jurgena and they have one daughter, Waneta Fay. She married Earl Franklin Sanford and they have one son, Bruce Allen. Valleda worked on the railroad with a 21 year senority, starting April 26, 1943, and now retired. Charlotte Evelyn went to St. Louis and worked at Barnes Hospital for ten years, and that is where she met her husband, Cellus Biles, and went to live in her father's native state, now living at Madison, Wis. He works for the State Department of Agriculture at Madison.

Arba and Mary Ann (McCoy) Liticker moved from North Carolina to the Bost Hill neighborhood about 1841. Grandparents of Lura Liticker Tucker, they raised her from the time she was 5. Arba would haul a load of corn to St. Louis, took more than a day, exchange part of it for other commodities. They would cut down bee trees, get tubs of honey. Mary Ann raised horehound and with the honey made cough drops. Also, from herbs she made pills for stomach trouble. She was just a kind of a neighborhood doctor. She had the first sewing machine and people would come to see it. Arba bought the place now owned by Jesse Schoeneweiss March 30, 1887. Ever since, some of his descendents have lived in Witt.

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In Memory Of

MR. AND MRS. LUCA PODBREGAR

By Son, Frank

THE THOMPSON FAMILY

Mrs. Fannie W. Thompson, a daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Henry T. Winter, was born in Shelby Co., September 5, 1892. In 1911 she was a graduate of Nokomis High School. She attended Eastern Illinois University. June 19, 1916, she married Wm. A. Thompson, a N.Y.C. telegrapher from Fair Grange, Ill. Mrs. Thompson taught in several country schools, one year in Coalton, two years in Wenonah, and three years in Nokomis Grade School. In July, 1936, she and her family, Grace, Ruth, and Frank, moved to Witt. From 1936 to 1959 she taught in the Witt Public School.

She is an active member of the United Methodist Church where she taught in the Church School for many years. She is a Past Worthy Matron of the Carnation Chapter O.E.S. 771 and is a Chaplain at the present time. She is also a member of The American Legion Auxiliary, The R.N.A., The White Shrine and the Library Board. After having taught in the Public Schools for 36 years, she is retired and lives at 312 N. Second St., in Witt.

Grace is married to Ernest Bair. Both Mr. and Mrs. Bair earned Master's Degrees at the University of Illinois, and both teach in Rantoul. Grace teaches typing in J. W. Eater Jr. High. Ernest teaches business education in Rantoul High School, and is a Lt. Commander in the Naval Reserve. Both are active in the U. M. Church and community affairs, and Grace was chosen this year for listing in "Outstanding Civic Leaders of the United States." They have two children, Jim, a senior in High School, who has won many music awards and plans to major in music at E. I. University next year. Judy, a freshman, likes language arts, sports, and is active in chorus, G.A.A., trampoline and Rainbow Girls. The Bairs have welcomed seven foreign students into their home for home stay of a month or more prior to attending college in the U. S., including a girl from Japan, and boys from Japan, Italy and Mexico. The Bairs are area chairmen for the Experiment in International Living.

Ruth is married to Robert E. Peterson. Ruth received her Master's Degree from Syracuse University and is currently working toward a doctorate at George Washington University, where she is Assistant Director of the Reading Center and Assistant Prof. of Education. Robert attended Northwestern and has been an executive with the Soybean Industry. His recent association with the Soybean Council of America made possible overseas trips and opportunities to meet people from many countries. Both have been active in civic and church activities, Bob serving as deacon and Pres. of Presbyterian Men. The Petersons have two children. David has been Salad Chef at the Rive Gauche during the past year. Donna looks forward to following in the family tradition and becoming a teacher.

Frank graduated from Witt High School with the class of 1940 and has attended Eastern and Bradley Universities. He is a member of the Witt M. E. Church. He is active in the Masonic Lodge, Irving 455, Scotish Rite and Shrine, American Legion, Forty and Eight, and Elks. He served for six years in the U. S. Navy during and after Warld War II. For the past eighteen years he has been employed by the Federal Aviation Administration. He is presently attached to the Central Regional Office of the agency in Kansas City, Mo., as an Airway Engineer. One of his hobbies is the collection and restoration of antique automobiles which he plans to expand into a full time business at 23 Broadway after retiring from Federal Civil Service employment.

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CONGRATULATIONS

WITT

ON YOUR 100TH BIRTHDAY

CHET & MARGARET (BRONZA) ZYDECK

MR. AND MRS. E. C. ARMENTROUT

Golden Wedding
May 21, 1963

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THE LITICKER FAMILY

Arba and Mary Ann (McCoy) Liticker moved from North Carolina to the Bost Hill neighborhood about 1841. Grandparents of Lura (Liticker) Tucker, they raised her from the time she was five. Arba would haul a load of corn to St. Louis, took more than a day, exchanged part of it for other commodities. They'd cut down bee trees, get tubs of honey. Mary Ann would raise hoarhound and with honey make cough drops. Also from herbs, she would make pills for stomach trouble. She was just a kind of neighborhood doctor. She had the first sewing machine, and people would come to see it. Arba bought the place now owned by Jesse Schoeneweiss, March 30, 1887. Ever since, some of his descendants have lived in Witt. "Tar Heels"

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DR. CHARLES E. WALCHER
WITT'S ONLY VETERINARIAN

Dr. Walcher was on call virtually 24 hours a day from 1910 until the day of his death in 1945. He doctored farm animals and pets in the Witt community.

He traveled first by horseback and buggy, and later by Model T Ford in all kinds of weather. In those days the roads were not surfaced and sometimes he would get stuck in deep mud. Then he would haul out his block and tackle, attach it to a fence post, and pull his Model T out of the mud. He is still remembered by many farmers in the Witt area.

He also owned an orchard and truck farm. He once had an additional ten acres of strawberries on rented land near town and most of the young people of Witt were hired as pickers. Another temporary sideline was chicken raising and for a few years he kept about 1000 laying hens.

Dr. Walcher was born on a farm near Rosamond on January 20, 1878. On Oct. 10, 1902, he and Katherine Ricketts of Pana were married, and for a few years they lived on the Platt farm southeast of Witt. In 1910 he graduated from the Chicago Veterinary School and then set up his practice in Witt.

Dr. and Mrs. Walcher raised five children, Julia, Mrs. Melvin Coffey of Witt; Donald of Denver; Lenore, Mrs. Russell Sparks of Hillsboro; Bruce of Menlo Park, California; and Alice June, Mrs. Clarence Pool of Chatsworth, Illinois. One child died in infancy.

Mrs. Walcher was a faithful, busy helpmate. In addition to raising her family and doing church work, she answered the phone and was always prepared to serve meals to her husband at irregular hours.

The lives of the Walchers were deeply rooted in the history of Witt.

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In Loving Memory of

JOSEPHINE LIPOVSEK
1899 - 1954

and

FRANK LIPOVSEK
1888 - 1966

Sadly missed by daughter and son-in-law
Josephine and Paul Akerley
Detroit, Michigan

BIOLCHINO FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Biolchino moved to Witt in the summer of 1924 with their six children, into the Vasaine house. All the children attended school in Witt. Mr. Biolchino was a coal miner for over 50 years prior to his death in 1951.

Their daughter, Angie, died in 1934.

Their surviving children and families are: Clara Schievien of Detroit; Sara Kovacic of Chicago; Mark Biolchino of Detroit; Louis Biolchino of Canoga Park, Calif.; Kathryn Vavrek of Cicero.

Mrs. Biolchino died Sept. 3, 1967.

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THE LOCKHART FAMILY

Dr. Charles H. Lockhart came to Witt in 1898 following his graduation from medical school and practiced medicine here until his death in 1940. He was imbued with a love and respect for Witt and its people and served as a physician and friend.

He served twenty years as President of the Board of Education and was Mayor for eight years. During his term as Mayor the community acquired many improvements including a new city water system.

He was interested in the business affairs of the town and was president of the old Oland National Bank and later a director of the Security National Bank.

Mrs. Lockhart came to Witt in 1908 and devoted a great part of her time to the teaching of music. Over a period of 50 years she had hundreds of piano pupils whom she presented in annual summer recitals.

She was pianist and organist for the Presbyterian Church and was very interested in all phases of church life.

She, too, was President of the Board of Education and was always interested in the welfare of the children of Witt.

The Lockharts had three children: Dr. Edmund Lockhart is a surgeon in Decatur, Illinois; Dr. Charles E. Lockhart is a surgeon in Springfield, Missouri, and Helen R. Lockhart is a phychiatric social worker in Chicago.

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THE KNODLE FAMILY

George Knodle, born 1845, a nurseryman and farmer in Witt Township, married Miss Nellie Hanson. They were parents of Glenn, William, Myron, and Mary all deceased, and Iola.

Glenn Knodle was married to Miss Lillie Hoffman in 1907. They were parents of two sons, Kenneth and Wayne, both farmers in Witt Township, and five daughters: Marie, wife of Gerald Frazier; Lucille, wife of Clayton Wolford; MaryBelle, wife of Emery Blaylock; Bette, wife of John Anderson; and Dorothy, wife of Charles Wittnam, formerly from Witt Township.

Kenneth Knodle married Miss Genevieve Kroeger, parents of two children, Eugene, married to Miss Joyce Kuhn; and Donna, wife of Joe Chausse, parents of Anita, Karen, Eddie and Mary.

Wayne Knodle and Miss Irene Newport were married and their children are: Gary, married to Miss Janice Hoffman, parents of a son, Todd; Larry, a senior at University of Illinois; and Karen, a junior at Greenville College.

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THE BOCK FAMILY

Martin Bock (1872-1936) one of nine children, was born in North Vernon, Indiana. He later came to Illinois and settled near Witt. On Nov. 27, 1899, he married Wilhelmina Huber. They were blessed with three sons, John, who died at the age of twelve, Martin, Jr., who lives on the home place, and Clement who died in 1961. Martin married Evelyn Singler and had 3 sons, Lamar, Larry, who died in 1960, and Robert. Clement married Alma Schwartz, children, Rose, Alfred and Delores. There are 7 great grandchildren.

JOHN BUCHKO FAMILY

John Buchko was born June 1, 1876, in Czechoslovakia. Mary Vavrek Buchko was born Jan. 25, 1885, in Czechoslovakia. John Buchko arrived in the U.S.A. March 17, 1891 and Mary Vavrek Buchko arrived in the U.S.A. Dec. 20, 1889.

They were married on May 6, 1901, in St. Cecelia Roman Catholic Church in Split Rock, N. Y. They moved to Moweaqua, Ill., then in 1902 moved to Witt, Ill. and worked in the Witt and Nokomis coal mines. They were the parents of nine children, four still living: George of Witt, William and Helen of Chicago, and Barbara Wanda (married) in Chicago. George passed away Aug. 11, 1958. Mary passed away Jan. 13, 1968 in their home in Witt. The home was owned by the Garland family before 1901.

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CHRISTIAN MEISENHEIMER FAMILY

Christian Meisenheimer (1861-1941) and Genevia Lloyd (1860-1931) were married in 1884. In 1904 they moved from Macoupin County to a farm near the Green Valley School in the Witt community. Mr. Meisenheimer farmed and had a milk route. The milk was hauled to the Witt Creamery. They lived on the Bote farm east of Witt from 1912-1919. In 1919 they purchased a farm north of Irving, where they spent the remainder of their lives. They were the parents of Josephine, wife of J. E. Griffin (deceased), Clem of Witt. Declecia, wife of Raymond White, a farmer in Irving and Witt Townships, Dorothy, a retired teacher, Irving; and John, Frank, Catherine Martin, and Christian, who are deceased. They had seven grandsons, Howard Griffin (deceased), Lloyd Martin, Ray White, Richard, Carl, Robert and Leland Meisenheimer served in the armed forces during W. W. II. There are 129 descendents.

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FRANK MEISENHEIMER FAMILY

Frank Meisenheimer (1885-1945) came to the Witt community with his parents in 1904. He worked and farmed around Witt. In 1907 he and Myrtle Gray, a teacher and daughter of Wm. Gray of Butler, were married. They purchased the J. W. Blackwelder farm at the edge of Witt in 1920. He farmed, sold bottled milk, shipped cattle out of Witt to St. Louis for the Farm Bureau. He served as Witt Township Assessor for 10 years and was Supervisor during the depression. He was respected by all for his kindness and fair dealing. When his health failed, he and his wife moved into Witt.

Their children are: Madeline, wife of Ira Matthews of LaGrange; Maurice of Virden; Loeta, a teacher in Paw Paw, wife of J. Marks, a farmer in Lee County. There are nine grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren. Four grandsons served in the armed forces.

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CHARLES L. BROWN FAMILY

Chas. L. Brown, who farmed 140 acres in Sec. 29, and 160 in Sec. 28, was born 1 mile west of the present family residence, Jan. 14, 1870. His parents were Thos. J. and Virginia E. (McCamant) Brown. Thos. J., born in Montgomery Co. June 7, 1843, farmed until 1902, then moved to Litchfield. Chas. L. Brown attended Starr School, Dist. 73 Witt, farmed with his father until April 21, 1896 when he married Anna M. Hoehn, born in Clinton Co. Feb. 14, 1873. Their four children were: Walter T., Ray A., Celia B., and Cleda M.—all members of St. Louis Catholic Church, Nokomis. Chas. L. died April 20, 1934, and Anna M., June 20, 1959.

Walter T. attended Starr School and after his father's death took over the Sec. 29 farm. On Aug. 11, 1954, he married Ida Fiocchi who died June 14, 1966. Ray A. also attended Starr. married Leona F. Millburg, Sept. 30, 1931, and took the Sec. 28 farm.

FRED GOULDEN FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Atherton

Jane Goulden

Fred Goulden

In 1907 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Atherton and daughter, Ann, came to Witt. Two years later their daughter, Jane, and her husband, Fred Goulden, and their daughter, Anne, one-year-old, came from Lancashire, England. To this union were born five more children, Ivy, Joseph A., Lillian, Norah and Betty Jane. There are 18 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

Fred and Jane raised their children in Witt, and all went to the Witt school. They left Witt for a brief time, returning in 1927, and opened a business off the highway near the Sam Lee's store.

When they first came to Witt Fred worked in the coal mines. In England he had been a coal miner and she was a weaver. Fred and Jane became citizens in 1923 and 1935, respectively.

His hobbies were drummer in the Witt Band and Photography, and he was very active in all sports. He would be best remembered for his good humor and home talent shows.

The family were members of the Presbyterian Church of Witt.

Jane was a homemaker and a member of the Royal Neighbors Lodge.

It is with love and gratitude that we, their children, dedicate this page in loving memory of our beloved grandparents, our wonderful Mother and Father, and dear sister, Lillian, who are at rest in the Witt Cemetery.

Sent in by Mrs. John (Anne) Laiza, Mrs. Harry (Ivy) Durston, Joseph A. Goulden, Mrs. Raymond (Norah) White and Mrs. Joseph (Betty Jane) Hustead.

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OWEN HOPLEY FAMILY

Owen Hopley and Mary A. Judson were married Sept. 13, 1919, at St. Leonard's Church in Belston Staff, England. They came to America in July of 1920, coming directly to Witt where Owen was employed in the area coal mines until his retirement in 1951. They became the parents of five children, Philip of Grafton, Bernard of Hillsboro, Owen of Claymont, Delaware, Kathleen, wife of John T. Lowe of Witt, and Kate, wife of Angelo Cordani, of Staunton. There are seventeen grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Owen, Sr., died Sept. 12, 1958.

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In Memory Of

MRS. GRACE JANE SCOBELL

1887 - 1963

WILLIAM SHELTON FAMILY

Research in Burkes' General Armory of the British Isles shows Shelton as an old English and Irish name. The Coat of Arms was granted in 1690. William Shelton, born Aug. 3, 1856, at St. Louis, Mo., died Oct. 1907, in Witt. He had one brother, Charles, and one sister, Mary. When his father died, he was put in an orphanage until he was 9 years old. At this time, Mr. Wm. Young, who lived 2 miles North of Witt, took him as a bound boy until he became of age. He married L. Belle Holmes. She was born in Gilford, Ind., Oct. 3. 1856, coming to Witt with her parents in 1860. She died March 13, 1936, in Witt. They were the parents of 6 children.

A son, Charlie, born Nov. 28, 1882, died Sept. 25, 1963. His children are: Leland Shelton, born March 8, 1904, died April 4, 1952, (father of Mrs. Mary Donanick, grandfather of Nancy, Edward, Wendy, of Mentor, Ohio, and Evelyn of Chicago, Ill.); Mrs. Imogene Richardson, who has one son. Larry, of Springfield, Ill.; Mrs. Garnet Whitten Mollman, Hillsboro, Ill. Her children are: Harry Whitten, who has 4 years with the Navy in WW II (father of Jim, Ron, Connie) of Litchfield, Ill.: Leland Whitten, 4 years Air Force in WW II. now a Navy Recruiter. His children, Mike, Steve, Cinda of Kauts. Ind.

A son, Thomas Shelton, born Dec. 29, 1883, died April 15, 1943. His children: Sgt. Cyril Shelton, 25 years in the U. S. Air Force with service in England, France, Germany and Saude Arabia, now retired. His children, Jerilyn, Susanne, Marylee, of Mascoutah, Ill.; Everett Shelton of Witt whose children are George (father of Steven), and Janet (mother of Marilyn, Paula and Gail, of Morrisonville, Ill.); Mrs. Thelma Goldsmith is the mother of six children: Sp. 4 Harry Goldsmith, Hq. Co. USAG, Fort Carson, Colo., (father of Jesse and Leslie, of Donnellson), Larry of Nokomis (father of Tracey), Mrs. Joyce Sidener, mother of Timothy, Oconee, Ill.), and Jim, Linda and Wilma Goldsmith at home. A son, Major Roy Shelton, has 28 years service in Italy, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Germany and is now with the Armed Forces Examining and Entrance Station at Oakland, Calif. His children are Sp. 4 Tom Shelton, 406 Trans. Corps Detachment, Viet Nam: Mrs. Melody Webb, Jr., whose children are Bobbie, Russell and Joaan of Kieserslaughtern, Germany.

A daughter, Mrs. Ann Cowan, has 7 children: Gene, Laura, Ethel, Margaret, Ann, Alexander and Earl of What Cheer, Iowa.

A daughter, Mary Shelton, died at the age of 14 in 1902 at Witt.

A son, Eugene Shelton, born June 3, 1886, died June 19, 1967. His children Mrs. Murial Goodwin (mother of John, with the 8th Air Force, of Nokomis, Ill.); Tech. Sgt. Eugene Shelton, WW II served in France, Belgium, has 6 children, Linda, Elaine, Lana, Mary, Betty, Lynn, of Detroit, Mich.; Mrs. Maxine Brown, her son, David, of Battle Ground, Ind.; Sgt. Lynn Shelton, 3 years Navy Air Force, now in National Guard (father of Douglas, Joseph and Sheri) of Witt.

A son, Louis Shelton, of Hillsboro, Ill., has 10 children: Helen and Hazel of St. Louis, Mo.; Mrs. Shirley Adams of Nokomis, Ill.; Mrs. Katie Elam of Hillsboro; Mrs. Charlene Shuckley, Donnellson, Ill.; Mrs. Darlene Christian, Irving, Ill.; Bill died in service; Louis, Leroy and Charles of Hillsboro, Ill.

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In Memory Of

ELMER EDDINGTON

by Evelyn Wittnam

THE GEORGE ARMENTROUT FAMILY

G. W. Armentrout was a son of Christopher (1797-1856) and Elizabeth (Borror) Armentrout (1813-1903) who moved from Pendleton Co., Va., to Illinois in 1838. They came in covered wagon over trails through the prairies and settled about 3 miles Southeast of the site where the city of Witt has since been built. After a few years they bought adjoining land and moved to it.

Christopher died when his son, George, was 8 months old. His widow reared their children and with their help farmed some land. When George (1855-1934) grew up he farmed the home place and married Ella J. Tucker (1857-1933) of the Witt community. They lived 53 years on the same farm where he was born, then moved into Witt. They were active members of the Methodist Church. They were parents of six children, Russell H., Homer S., Elbert C., Edith M., a son and a daughter who died in infancy.

Russell married Alta Yerkes. Homer married Grace Carriker and to them were born six children, Lincoln, Helen Moffat, Alma Grills, Norman, a son, George, who died when small, and Alice Payne, who died in 1960. Grace died in 1919 and later Homer married Ethel Wakeman. Elbert married Eva Chinn and their children are Ruby Degg and Melvin Armentrout. Eva died in 1964 and Elbert in 1967.

Great-grandchildren of George and Ella Armentrout are Larry, James and Marsha Armentrout, Judith (Armentrout) Geger, Mary (Moffat) Hansen, James and Gwendolyn Moffat, Mary (Payne) Ghormley, Catherine, Fred and John Payne, Kenneth and Jerry Degg, Glenn and Lloyd Armentrout. There are five great-great-grandchildren, Elisa and David Hansen, Larisa Moffat, Kellye and Todd Geger.

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WILLIAM P. HAGTHROP FAMILY

William P. Hagthrop and wife, Harriet, and three children moved to Witt in 1907. They built a new home on Second St. Mr. Hagthrop published the Witt Press, a weekly newspaper, from 1907 to 1918. Miss Kate Whitnack was reporter and proof reader for several years.

Herbert G. Hagthrop was born in 1910 in Witt, now lives in Lomita, Calitornia, and is employed by Northrop-Norair as buyer.

Mr. Hagthrop established and published "Orange County Reporter", legal daily newspaper from 1921 until his death in 1941. A son, Edward C. Hagthrop and others in the family still publish the "Orange County Reporter" in Santa Ana, Calif.

Mrs. Harriet M. Hagthrop died in 1955.

Robert W. Hagthrop lived in Long Beach and was employed by North American Aviation until retirement. He died Dec. 2, 1967.

A daughter, Julietta, is now Mrs. L. R. Paris and lives in Santa Ana, California.

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BENJAMIN S. RANSDELL FAMILY

Benjamin Sheridan Ransdell was born in Vigo County, Indiana, Feb. 20, 1837. He married Hannah J. Andurs Nov. 11, 1858. He came to Illinois in the early sixties, following the Civil War, where he served 3 years. When mustered out he was a Lieutenant in the 6th Volunteer Cavalry. After the war he settled on a farm 2½ miles southeast of Witt, later moving to a farm farther south of the Carriker farm, which is now owned by Mr. Niemi. He retired from the farm in 1898 and moved to Witt where he lived until after the death of his wife in 1911. He lived with his daughter, Mrs. Jessie Crowder for several years, and later with his daughter, Mrs. Olive Battles for several years until he passed away in Feb. 1920 at the age of 83 years and 2 days.

He was the father of 10 children: George, Mary Ellen, Eliza Olive, Rhoda Ann, Jessie, Edward, John, and Grace, all of whom are deceased. Two died in infancy.

MICHAEL KOMAR FAMILY

Michael Komar and Anna Popovich came from Czechoslovakia in the year of 1894. They met in Pennsylvania and were married in 1903.

They were blessed with seven children, Ann (Hanisko) and Michael were born in Mowequa and five in Witt, Marie (Smith), John (Brown), Steve (Skin), Andrew (Druke) and Margaret (Pehanich).

Mike spent thirty years as a miner in the Witt, Coalton and Nokomis mines. During Word War II Mike did defense work in Cicero to aid Uncle Sam bring victory to the United States, and bring his two sons, John and Andrew, home from the Pacific, where they spent two years in the Phillipines.

When the war ended Mike retired and spent his reclining years taking care of his home, gardening and raising flowers of which he was very proud.

Mike and Anna Komar were well liked and respected by all their neighbors in the East end of Witt. Both were devout members of St. Barbara's Catholic Church.

Anna passed away in her home in 1951. Mike spent the latter years of his life with his children in the Chicago suburbs, returning to Witt each Spring until his death in 1962. Both were laid to rest in Witt.

The home still remains in the family and is visited annually by the members of the Komar family.

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EDWIN PLATT FAMILY

Edwin Platt, born April 19, 1889; Lula Bell Lee Platt, born November 25, 1888; married February 12, 1908. One daughter, Dorothy Edwina, born February 2, 1920; married Alva Detmers January 6, 1938. Three children, Alan James, born October 17, 1944; Edwin Andrew, born December 23, 1950; Janet Lea, born August 10, 1955. Alan James Detmers married Karen Sue Kamer January 31, 1965. One son, Alan James, Jr., born December 9, 1965.

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GEORGE KORDYAK FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. George Kordyak were born in Austria, Hungary. Mrs. Kordyak died in 1918 and Mr. Kordyak in 1927, leaving six living children. The children are: George Jr. of California (retired) father of three sons who took over his business; Mary, of New York, has one stepson, an Opera singer; Ann of Chicago, retired from Sears Roebuck & Co. after 32 years, mother of Ronald, a Physical Education teacher in California; Albert of Chicago, is employed by State Dept. of Agriculture, dealing in cattle, and is the father of one son entering college and one in high school; Mildred of California has one son in college and one in high school; and John of California has one daughter in high school.

We enjoy visiting Witt--it's like coming "home"!

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DOMNICK A. TARRO FAMILY

Domnick A. Tarro, better known as Nick, graduated from Witt H.S. in 1923. He received his BA at Millikin U., 1932, and taught school at Bethany, Ill. Married Mabel Haacke of Chester, Ill. Have three sons, Jimmie Nick, John and Bill. Jimmie, MD from Utah U., John also from Utah U., manager of insurance company, Bill attending Texas Tech. Veteran of WW II. Served in Navy as Lt. Cdr. Retired from Civil Service, now making home in Roswell, N. M.

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LOUIS AND ANNE KISH

Louis and Anne Kish came to Witt as bride and groom in 1906. They occupied a house just east of St. Barbara's rectory while their new home was being built. This union was blessed with five children, Elizabeth, Therese, Steve, Helen and George. Louis died in 1955, Anne in 1965. This family shared both joys and sorrows in the old Kish residence and the city of Witt. May God bless any of our friends who still call Witt their home.

JOHN STAUDER FAMILY

John Stauder, son of Frank and Sophia (Bassler) Stauder, was born January 16, 1345 in St. Clair County, Illinois. He married Magdalena Von Hatten, born August 23, 1849, in Alsace Larraine and who came to St. Clair County with her parents at a very early age. As soon as they were married John Stauder and his wife moved to Montgomery County and bought eighty acres of land in Witt Township in the 1860's.

They became the parents of six children, the second child being Frank Stauder who was born on the farm in Witt Twp., April 17, 1871. Frank Stauder lived at home with his parents on the farm and attended the district schools. In October, 1904, he left the farm and he and his brother, Henry, came to Witt and bought the store owned by Albert Spannagle. The Spannagle store was located in the East end in Old Witt. In 1904, Ben Hoehn and Frank Stauder formed a partnership and built the hardware store now known as Stauder's, Inc. From 1906 until his death in 1945, Frank operated the Hardware and Furniture, Plumbing and Heating business with John Hoehn. These two gentlemen also introduced and operated an undertaking establishment during these years.

In January, 1906, Frank Stauder was married to Frances Margaret Mast, daughter of Charles and Catherine (Baurick) Mast, of Montgomery County, natives of Prague, Austria. Frank Stauder and his wife were parents of five children, all born in Witt, and all graduates of Witt High School. Lawrence, born in 1908, married Margaret Hassett of Milwaukee. They have one son and are living in South Bend, Indiana, where Lawrence, a graduate of Notre Dame University, has been a member of the faculty there in the college of engineering since 1937. Mary Genevieve, born 1911, is now Mother Provincial of the School Sisters of Notre Dame at St. Louis, Mo. Regina, born 1914, was educated at Sacred Heart Academy in Springfield, Ill., and is now employed in secretarial work in Indianapolis, Ind. Louise, born in 1917, attended college at Bloomington, Ill., and taught in the Witt School. She is the widow of Joseph M. Hughes and lives in Indianapolis, Ind. She has six children.

Maurice, born 1920, was graduated from Notre Dame University in 1941. He was married to Dorothy Jean Baker of Brazil, Ind., on June 20, 1942. They are parents of five children. They moved from Chicago, Illinois, to Witt in 1945, soon after the death of Frank Stauder. He purchased his father's partnership and the firm continued doing business as Stauder and Hoehn. In 1955, Maurice Stauder built the Stauder Gas Company, Inc., bulk plant and in 1959 assumed control of Stauder and Hoehn, now Stauder's, Inc. Both corporations expanded until in 1963, Northern Propane purchased the facilities of the Stauder Gas Co. Maurice retired from business at this time and is now serving as Chairman of the Science Department at Danville (Illinois) Junior College.

With the passing of the first 100 years of family history in Witt township, Gregory Stauder the oldest of the five sons of Maurice and Dorothy, returned to Witt in 1968 to help continue the family history into a second century.

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JOHN TRUHAN FAMILY

John Truhan and Barbara Sarsany both came from Zavadka in Czechoslovakia, to the U. S. in 1910. They met again in Pana, Illinois, and were married in St. Louis, Feb. 2, 1915.

Mr. Truhan was a coal miner, then a tavern owner for 18 years until retirement. They are the parents of five children: Michael (deceased), Mary (Mrs. Tom Wolstyniak) of Cicero, has one daughter, Patsy; Margaret (Mrs. Raymond Korbar) of Witt; Helen (Mrs. Joseph Golitko) of St. Clair Shores, Michigan, has two children, Diane and Larry; and Annie Truhan, lives at home in Witt.

THE LOUIS SCHWARTZ FAMILY

John Schwartz, who was born in 1837, in Germany, came with his wife, Catherine, to Illinois where he engaged in farming. One of their children, John, was born April 2, 1870, in Clinton county and came to Montgomery county March 4, 1893. He engaged in both farming and coal mining and married Florence Hoehn April 6, 1911. Florence, the daughter of Joseph and Henrietta (Nieft) Hoehn was born November 9, 1890, in Witt Township.

They had twelve children, Alma, Francis, Olivia, Freda, Walter, Lucille, Lorene, Leo, Helen, Elizabeth, Carl and Louis.

Louis Sylvester, born July 8, 1933, married Mary Alice Boehler June 30, 1962. Mary was born June 15, 1941, and is the daughter of William and Minnie Boehler of Rural Nokomis. They have a son, Rodney Allen, born February 11, 1965. Louis has been Mayor of the City of Witt since 1961.

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WITTNAM-JURGENA

Elizabeth Guile, daughter of George and Mary Ann Guile, was married Feb. 23, 1897, to Heie Jurgena, son of Hiram and Annie Jurgena. They were the parents of 6 children: Rubbert, Stella, Wilbur, Etta, Melvin and Inez. Hal Wittnam, son of Frank and Sarah Wittnam, was married Jan. 22, 1901, to Carrie Grantham, daughter of Jacob and Mary Grantham. They were the parents of 2 sons, Walter and Rolla. On Sept. 28, 1927, Walter Wittnam was married to Etta Jurgena. They are living on a farm south of Witt. Walter and Rolla are in partnership farming and trucking. They are the parents of two daughters, Wilma and Donna. On Sept. 2, 1950, Wilma married Harry Joyce. He is employed at Hillsboro Glass factory and they also farm. They are the parents of 8 children, Yvonne, Delores, Melba, Dale, Tom, Lee, Mary Jo and Hal. The children attend Witt School and are active in 4-H Clubs. On July 2, 1966, Donna married Robert B. Boston, Jr. Donna is a graduate of S.I.U. They now live in New York where Donna teaches school and her husband is serving in the Air Force.

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HENRY F. HOEHN FAMILY

Henry F. Hoehn, born Oct. 10, 1885, near Witt, came to Witt in Nov. 1905 and started to work in the Oland National Bank. On May 25, 1909, he married Elizabeth Vincent. They have three sons.

Their first son, Vincent Henry Hoehn, was born April 25, 1910. On Oct. 12, 1935, he married Frances Margaret Pallai of Nokomis. They reside in South Bend, Ind. They have one son, Dr. James Gurney of Rochester, Minn., and one grandson, James Gurney Hoehn.

Their second son, Marvin Raymond, was born May 3, 1912 in Witt and graduated from Witt High School in 1930. He attended the University of Illinois. On May 14, 1936, he married Enid Pyle, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Pyle of Witt. They now live in South Bend, Ind., and they are parents of three children, Mrs. Kenneth Plantz of LaPorte, Ind., Mrs. Richard Sullivan of South Bend, Ind., and Charles Raymond at home. Mr. and Mrs. Plantz have four children, Michael, David, Jane Elizabeth and Thomas Andrew.

Their third son, Joseph Bailey Hoehn, was born July 30, 1915. He married Fairy Mae Jones on Nov. 24, 1938. They have two sons, Joseph Perry, U. S. Navy, married Rae Jean Spunker Dec. 12, 1961. They have one daughter, Annett Lee. Another son, Bernard B., is at home with his parents in Taylorville.

THE HUBER FAMILY

The Huber family consisting of M. Walter and Elmer J. moved to the Witt community in 1920 from the Coffeen farmily area.

Their ancestry goes back to Germany when Joseph Huber and Frances Ernst were married and came to the U. S. in about 1862 locating in the Coffeen area. They had seven children, one of which was Henry Huber who married Carrie Braun and they were the parents of Walter and Elmer.

Walter married Anna Sommer of Oakieville, Illinois. In 1920 they came to farm south of Witt. They are the parents of three children. Kathryn, wife of Page Walcher of Irving with five children, Donna, Dale, Don, Connie and Keith. Lawrence of Witt married Marilou Colonius of Nokomis and have eight children, Daniel, Karen, Carla, Laura, Lorene, Bruce, Philip and Vernon. Raymond of East Alton married Mary Grant of Decatur, two children, Bonita and Michael.

Elmer, second son of Henry and Carrie Braun Huber, first married Emma Sommer of Oakieville. She passed away. Later he married Bertha Huber of Missouri. In the 1920's they came to farm south of Witt. They are the parents of five children. Alvin married Carol Bey, now of Granite City, Illinois, has three children, Susan, Keith and Kevin. Irene, wife of Floyd Clark of Nokomis, has five children. Rose Marie, Edward. Linda, Ronnie and Mark. Edwin married Barbara Weiss, now of Decatur, has three children. Therese, Kathy and Lisa. Arthur of Tacoma, Washington, married JoAnn Glaser, has three children, Garv, Mike and Debbie. Mildred, wife of Robert Clark of Nokomis, has two children. Diana and Sandra.

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ALONZO A. BETTY FAMILY

Alonzo A. Betty was one of the first settlers of the Witt Community. He was instrumental in laying out the City of Witt, the Oland Park addition, Broadway and in consolidating Witt and Paisley. He left his mark on many of the buildings, as he was an architect and contractor. He helped organize Oland National Bank, (stockholder), Oland Brick and Tile Works; Vice President of Montgomery County Coal Co.

He was born in Litchfield Township January 18, 1853, a son of Isaac and Louisa (Allen) Betty of Smith County, Tennessee. In 1876 he married Ida Berry, daughter of Moses Berry of Butler. They were parents of 6 sons and 2 daughters. One son, William, settled in Witt. A son, Milo Oland, died at age 6 and a daughter died in infancy. Alonzo Betty died in 1920.

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WILLIAM E. BETTY FAMILY

William E. Betty, prominent business man came to Witt, at age of 9, with his parents. He was educated in the Witt schools and helped his father in the butcher shop until he was old enough to take over the business. On Dec. 3, 1908, he married Nellie Wilson of Fayette County, and she still resides in Witt. They are parents of a son, Clarence, who with his wife, the former Charline Ernst. resides on a farm in Fillmore Township. They are parents of 2 children, Mardin and Camilla; two great-grandchildren, Michael Betty and Julie Dodson.

Mr. Wm. Betty was a member of the Methodist Church, which he helped build. He was active in local affairs and helped to make the community what it is today. Mr. Betty died in 1950.

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WM. WALTER ROWLEY FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Rowley were Witt residents Jan. 1916 to Sept. 1941 in mine examiner years. He was appointed City Clerk from 1931 to 1934 and was Township Supervisor several years. He served on the Labor Day committee several times and was with the Witt Band through the years. The family were members of the Methodist Church. The children in school from 1920 to May 1941 were Marion, Leo, Eugene, Alta and Cora.

WILLIAM LOWE

FAMILY

Back row, left to right, Harry, Jack; front row, William, young William, Margaret.

William Lowe was born in Wigan, Lancashire, England on September 25, 1878, one of thirteen children. He attended St. Catherine's Elementary School until the age of 13 when he left school and went to work in the mine. William attended St. Catherine's Church of England, where he married Margaret Fish in January 1898. The new Mrs. Lowe was born May 21, 1879, one of nine children, in Wigan, Lancashire, England. She attended the same school and church as her husband. Two boys were born while the family lived in England, Harry, June 17, 1899 and Jack, April 19, 1903.

In order to earn a better living, William left his family in England and sailed for America from Liverpool on the ship, The Baltic, June 20, 1906. He came directly to Witt and went to work in the Old Mine. He earned his entire living in the mines in the Witt area until 1939 when they closed.

While her husband was in America, Mrs. Lowe worked in the mill in England as a cotton weaver and in April 1907, she and her two boys sailed for America aboard the ship, The Oceanic. The Lowe family lived in a rented home, Westlake's, until June 1908, when they purchased their own home and where Mrs. Lowe is still living. The entire family attended the Witt Methodist Church when they arrived in Witt and still attend there. On July 25, 1909, another son, the last child to be born to the family, arrived. He was named William, after his father.

William, his wife, Margaret, and young William returned to England for a visit in April 1921 and returned to Witt in August, where the two older boys, Harry and Jack had stayed.

The boys, as almost all boys do, soon married and raised families of their own. Harry married Agnes Tarren on June 20, 1923 and they had one son, John T. Jack married Nora Redmond on October 19, 1926 and they had one son, Robert. William married Mary Kisak on November 1, 1930 and they had three children, Barbara, Margaret and William.

Mr. Lowe was active in the Redman Lodge, The Eagles, The Witt Band, The United Mine Workers, later named the Progressive Miners. Mrs. Lowe was and still is a member of the Royal Neighbors, worked in the Red Cross during World War I and was Precinct Committee Woman during the term of Gov. Horner and Franklin Roosevelt.

In November, 1939, Jack, a guard at Statesville prison, died and his father followed shortly on February 8, 1940. Harry, who worked in the mines and was an auditor for the Progressive Miners, died August 25, 1955. William, who worked as a store manager and was City Treasurer of Witt for 15 years, died April 26, 1968, leaving his mother, Mrs. Margaret Lowe as the only living member of the original family. Mrs. Lowe is now 89 years of age and has 5 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-grandchild.

THE LYERLA FAMILY

In 1901, William S. Lyerla, an engineer at the Paisley coal mine, brought his wife, Elsie Burke, and four children, Dwight, Lois, Ralph and Frank, to Witt from Irving. For fourteen years the family made its home in Witt, and during that time, three more children, Frederick, Lottie and Burke, were born. Will Lyerla worked as carpenter in the New Mine at this period. Then the family moved to Hillsboro, which is still the home of Mrs. Frederick Lyerla (Ethel Frarer), her son, Jim Lyerla, his wife, the former Shirley Ann Rush, and their three children, Mary Ruth, Fred and Joe.

At present, Lois and Lottie make their home in Laguna Beach, California. Ralph and his wife, Ruby, live in Spokane, Washington, and Frank and his wife, Eileen, have homes in Fenton, Michigan, and Bradenton, Florida.

Will Lyerla died in 1942, Elsie in 1957. Three of the children too, are now dead. Dwight of a heart attack in Dallas in 1961, Frederick of meningitis in Hillsboro in 1944, and Burke killed in heroic action in World War II for which the Silver Star was awarded posthumously.

Dwight's daughter, Dolores Lyerla Mimier, is a space-center computer programmer living at Indian Harbor Beach, Florida, and the mother of three children: Brian, Burke and Claire. Patsy Lyerla Corso, Fred's daughter, is a teacher in the adult-education program for new, non English-speaking Detroiters. She is the mother of Bob, Roger and Patty Ann and wife of Aldo Corso, a detective with the police force. Ralph's son, Jack, operates his own construction engineering firm in Spokane and is the father of Jean and Jim, a recently returned veteran of Viet Nam.

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RUSHFORD FAMILY

Andrew and Eugenia Rushford came to Paisley (later called Witt) in 1901 from Michigan, bringing with them seven children of their own and one adopted son, named Rankin. Four children died in infancy.

"Bill" later married Angeline Scott and to this marriage six children were born. He died in 1958 at the age of 70.

Josephine married James Selett and they are the parents of four children.

George married Rose Selett and they too had four children. George, like his father, was a coal miner. He lost his life at the age of 38 in Tovey Mine No. 7, in 1930.

John married Ethel Lyons. They were the parents of three children. John died in Burlington, Iowa, in 1963, age 68.

Andrew, Jr., married Anna Battiste and they have four children. Presently they reside at Pekin, Ill.

Millie and Chris Rodeghier were married in 1919 and were the parents of three children. Chris died in 1963, age 67.

Margaret married Alvin Hoehn and they too have three children. The Hoehns live in Witt Township.

Eugenia and Joe were born after the Rushfords moved to Witt.

Eugenia is the wife of Leo Vericker and they farm in the Witt community.

Joe and his wife, the former Velma Peters, live on a farm in Pickett, Wis.

Andrew, Sr., died in 1957, age 92. His wife Eugenia died in 1935, age 68.

THE

LYERLA FAMILY

RODEGHIER FAMILY

Anton and Johanna Rodeghier came to Witt in 1901 from Joliet, Ill. They were the parents of five children.

Elizabeth married John Schievenien. They lost their only child in infancy. Elizabeth died in 1934, age 40.

Chris married Millie Rushford and they were the parents of three children. Their eldest, Andrew, an Air Force navigator, was lost in the South Pacific in 1945, during World War II, age 23.

Mary married Columbus Oselett. Their two children died in infancy and Mary died in 1932, age 36.

Andy was killed in Witt Coal Mine No. 12 when he was 16 years old.

Lorene died in 1921 at the age of 7.

In later years Anton and Johanna returned to Italy. In 1933 Johanna died at the age of 56 and was buried in her native land.

Anton came back to Witt and made his home with his son, Chris, and family until he died in 1936, age 70.

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CARRIKER FAMILY

The Carriker homestead—Witt T 8 & 9 N. R 2 W. It was bought from the Government in 1852 by Moses Sechler, who came here from North Carolina. In 1873 it became the life-long home of his daughter, Frances C. and Columbus L. Carriker. Of their children, Orval, Bertha, Lester and Grace are deceased.

Ophe resides in Carbondale, Ill., and Harry, Ethel and Ina still make their home here.

THE MIKE POPOVICH FAMILY

Mike Popovich was born in Czechoslovakia in 1887 and came to Moweaqua, Ill., at the age of 18. While seeking employment he came to Witt to work in the new mine. He left the mine and went to Pennsylvania to work and married Katherine Hardy in May, 1912. He brought his bride to Witt where they have made their home. Mike passed away in 1957.

Mike and Katherine became the parents of five children, John, Michael, Steve, Ann and William. John married Anna Vavrek and they are the parents of four daughters, Betty, Phyllis, Lola and Sandy. Michael married Harriet Zen and to them was born one daughter, Gloria. Ann married Art Chapman and they have one son, Tommy. William married Marie Honrath and they are the parents of two sons, Eddie and Mark. Steve makes his home with his mother. William and Ann live in Detroit, Mich., while John and Michael reside in Chicago, Ill.

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THE BAKER FAMILY

The Baker farm of 273 acres in Section 30, Town 9, was purchased by Calvin Baker in January, 1851.

Henry, the eldest son, bought out the interests of the other 12 children. The main house was built in 1863.

P. R. Baker has lived on the farm his 80 years, except 7 years while at school in Irving and the U. of I.

He and Mrs. Baker (Elenore Catherine Brookman) celebrated their 58th anniversary September 30, 1967.

LESTER WITTNAM FAMILY

Lester, son of F. C. and Sarah Wittnam, was born on a farm South of Witt March 29, 1887. One of 11 children, he is the only surviving one. He married Lucy Battles on November 28, 1917, and they have resided on a farm South of Nokomis since that time. They celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary in November 1967. They are the parents of two daughters, Merle and Geraldine. Two sons died in infancy. Merle married Monroe Berns May 14, 1946, and now lives in Nokomis. They are the parents of two children, Eileen and Lucy Ann. Geraldine married Garland Holloway July 31, 1955, and now lives in Witt.

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JOHN LOWE FAMILY

John Lowe and Ann Ormeshire were married in England and came to Witt in 1908. They had two sons and a daughter.

ALFRED LOWE, Ineta Sawyer
- Margaret and Norman Groesch
  - John, Ruth, Mary Ellen, Jean James
- Larry and Betty Lewis
  - Ricky, Randy, Robin
- Edward and Barbara Feraris
  - Lisa

JOHN LOWE, JR., Verona Bennett
- Gary and Edith Grabow
  - Renee, Brad
- Donald and Patty Fox
  - Tracy, John Scott, Jimmy Duke
- John III and Sheryllee Jones

MARGARET LOWE, Stephen Jones
- Joann and Richard Bagley
  - Kelly Jo, Kirby Aileen
- Nancy and Dan Malcolm

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THE SAWYER FAMILY

Homer Sawyer was born Oct. 1, 1880, at Ramsey, Ill. He was a son of Asa and Chloe (Temple) Sawyer. He came to Witt as a young man, and married Viola Barringer in 1902. She was born April 30, 1878, in Fillmore township, a daughter of Rufus and Meca (Sanders) Barringer. She traveled extensively through the Western states in a covered wagon, lived in a sod house, and was present when the Cherokee strip was opened.

To this union six daughters were born, Mrs. Lula Weathers of Benton, Ill., Retta Marfell of Hillsboro, Ill., Ineta Lowe of Witt, Cleo Whittaker of Paducah, Ky., Josephine Whitlock of Downers Grove, Virginia Fleming of Centralia, Ill. They have 13 grandchildren and twenty-one great grandchildren. Mr. Sawyer passed away April 14, 1960, and Mrs. Sawyer passed away May 25, 1968, at at the age of ninety.

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ERNEST SMITH FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Smith, parents of four children, all W.H.S. students. They are, L. to R. Marcella '45, Burton '39, Irma '54, and Russell '38. Father died in 1938. Mother and Irma Kunz live in Litchfield; Marcella in Springfield; Burton in Decatur, and Russell in St. Louis.

MARTIN SARSANY FAMILY

Like most of the citizens of Czech ancestry living in Witt, Martin and Helen (Kisak) Sarsany were born in the little mountain town of Zavadka in Czechoslovakia. Martin (born Nov. 8, 1886) came to the U. S. in 1902, making the journey alone at the age of 16. He lived with his mother, Anna, and stepfather, John Lesko, in Pennsylvania and began working immediately in the Pittsburgh area coal mines. Helen, his wife, was born March 20, 1888, and came to Pittsburgh in 1904 to join her brother, John Kisak, who later became a Witt resident, too. Helen, like Martin, sought employment and became self-supporting as soon as she reached the U. S. At the age of 21, Martin began working in the Pana, Illinois coal mines, but returned to Pennsylvania two years later where he married Helen in suburban Trauger during the summer of 1910. Shortly after their marriage, they, along with the Leskos, came to Witt where they have since made their home. Martin worked in both the New (Number 14) and Old (Number 10) mines in Witt. Their happy marriage ended with the death of Helen, at the age of 56, on April 22, 1945.

They were blessed with 13 children, all living, except the eldest, John, who died at age 3. They are: Michael (1912) of Des Plaines, married to Rose Buffo. Their children are Robert (1938) and Dennis (1945). Robert and Roberta (Stupple have four children: Deborah (1961), Douglas (1963), Kevin (1965) and Amy (1966). Dennis was wed this year to Lisa Arrichiello.

Anne (1914) of Cicero, was married to Anthony Nowickas, who died in 1952, and has a son, Gary (1944).

Stephen (1915), of Glen Ellyn, married Clara Zozaski and has a daughter, Judith, (1946).

Helen (1917), of Witt, married Edward Hmielak. Their children are Paul (1956) and Karen (1958).

Mary (1919), of Bensenville, married Anthony Yarro. They have a son, Mark (1952).

Kathryn (1921), of Witt, married Chester Sommers and has three children: Gerald (1945) who married Georgia Sue Reynolds, Denise (1953) and Mary Jean (1957).

Margaret (1922), of Witt, married Francis Holthaus. They have a daughter, Diane (1948) who is engaged to George Rosko.

Nicholas (1924) lives at home with his father.

Andrew (1926), of Witt, married Jean Dillman. They have five children: Helen (1958), Peter (1959), Martin (1960), Mary (1961) and Barbara (1962).

Verona (1929) lives at home with her father and brother, Nick.

John (1931), of Witt, married Carolyn Franzen. They have four daughters: Joan (1961), Lori (1962), Jacqueline (1964) and Lisa (1966).

Paul (1932), of Witt, married Marie VandenBergh. They have two daughters, Paula (1965) and Michele (1967).

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THE NICOLOTTI FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Nicolotti Sr., came from northern Italy, bringing with them two daughters Theresa and Anna. They settled in Witt in 1904 where Mr. Nicolotti went to work in the mine. Five more children were born to the family, namely, Anthony, Elsie, Joseph, Louis and Norma. Joseph passed away at the age of two in Witt.

In 1927 Mr. and Mrs. Nicolotti purchased a farm two and a half miles northwest of Witt, where Louis Jr., now lives with his wife, the former Helen Laughlin. In 1942 Louis and Maria Nicolotti retired from the farm and moved to Witt to make their home. Five months later, Mr. Nicolotti died on Aug. 4, 1942, and his wife died in 1953.

Louis and Helen Nicolotti became the parents of two children, Nancy wife of William

Rice of Nokomis and James, of Springfield, who married the former Donna Keating. The Rices have two children Susan and Sandra.

Theresa married Lionel Lucchesi, who is now deceased, and she lives in St. Louis. They have three children, Dolores, Gloria and Lionel Jr. Dolores is married to Bernard Gaia and they have 4 children; Gloria and her husband, Arthur Jones have 2 daughters; and Lionel is married to the former Mary Ann Wheeler. They all live in St. Louis.

Anna also lives in St. Louis, and she is married to Gordon Seaman. They have three children, Virginia, Jean and Carol. Carol is now Sister Elizabeth Marie B.V.M. and teaches school in Iowa; Virginia is Mrs. Wm. Connolly and they reside in Granite City with 5 children; Jean and husband Lee, live in St. Louis and have one daughter.

Anthony and wife, the former Louise Venegone also reside in St. Louis and their family is Barbara, Robert and Patricia. Barbara is Mrs. Tom Williams and has 5 children; Patty is married to Wm. Campbell and has one daughter; and Bob and wife, Shirley, also live in St. Louis.

Elsie and her husband, John Genoni, are living in Pasadena, California, and Norma is making her home with Louis and Helen Nicolotti in Witt.

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W. EUGENE SHELTON FAMILY

W. Eugene Shelton was born June 3, 1886, in the town of Witt, and passed away June 19, 1967. He married Bertha A. Brummet at Watseka, Ill., June 20 1917. He was a son of William and Laura Belle Holmes Shelton and a descendent of William Rawlings who came to Witt Township in 1850. Eugene lived his entire life in Witt. He was a coal miner for 45 years, going into the mines at the age of 12. He also served 2 years as Chief of Police. He was a member of the I.O.O. F. Lodge for 64 years, and also a member of the Presbyterian Church.

They were the parents of four children, Muriel, wife of John Goodwin of Nokomis, Ill., Maxine, wife of Donald Brown of Battle Ground, Ind., Eugene of Detroit, Mich., and Lynn of Witt. There are 11 grandchildren.

Mrs. Shelton (Bertha) was the daughter of Richard and Permelia Arnold Brummet and was born in Audubon Township October 17, 1894. The Brummet family moved to Witt Township in 1900. Mr. Brummet was a teamster and also Supt. of Streets for many years. There were five children in the Brummet family, Claude, Fred, Henry, Bertha, wife of Eugene Shelton, and Ruby, wife of Albert Glaze of Springfield. There are 21 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren.

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PANIERI FAMILY

Pete Panieri, born in Spaudon in the Piedmont of North Italy, came to Witt in 1906 to help sink the North Mine. Christina Panieri, from the same village, joined him in 1908. They were married in Hillsboro, Ill.

In 1910 John Panieri brother of Pete, joined the family. Of that North Italian village of 17 families, all but two came to North or South America.

Pete and John worked in the mine and in 1919 bought the farm where Mrs. Panieri now lives. For 20 years they delivered milk to Witt customers.

Mr. and Mrs. Panieri have three children. The only son, Justino, born 1910, married Lillian Hadley in 1941, and they have three children, Lorraine born 1945, graduated Jan. 1963 with a B.A. degree in music from Wesleyan University of Bloomington. She is employed as a teacher in the Taylorville unit. Roselyn, born 1952, is a Junior at Witt High School. John, born 1958, is a fifth grade student.

Ann, the older daughter of Mr. and Mrs.

Pete Panieri, was born 1912 and is now Mrs. Max Pike of Monticello, Ill. She graduated from U. of I. in 1932 and taught languages in High School until she joined the Woman's Marine Corps, where she served in the intelligence department and advanced to rank of major. She now teaches languages in Monticello High School.

Dorena, born 1914, graduated from Brown's Business College in Decatur and in 1948 married Albert Meiners of Nokomis.

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MR. AND MRS. ROY ZEPP

In memory of our parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Zepp, life-long residents of Witt. Mr. Zepp was a barber for 54 years, with the exception of 8 years, he had a shop at Oglesby, Ill. They celebrated their Golden Anniversary in 1957. They were members of Witt Methodist Church. Mr. Zepp was born March 18, 1881 in Witt Township, a son of James and Matilda (Fisher) Zepp, and died March 6, 1965. Mrs. Edith Zepp was born October 18, 1886, a daughter of Wm. and Cora (Alvis) Carriker, and died February 1, 1968. They were married Christmas Day, 1907, at Irving, Ill. They have two daughters, Mrs. Richard (Thelma) Rodawald and Mrs. Edgar (Sylvia) Dittle, both of Collinsville.

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IN THE EARLY DAYS . . .

The trip to St. Louis took 2 to 4 weeks in 1840. Six or seven yoke of oxen were hitched to one cart. The mud was tough and almost bottomless. There were no bridges and wagons were unloaded on the bank and the load carried across piecemeal. Charge for freight was $1.00 per 100 pounds. Venison hams were sold in the settlements enroute. They were a welcome addition to the usual hog and hominy diet.

FRED MITCHELL

Fred Mitchell, one of the early settlers of Witt Township, was born in England in 1844. He did not come to Witt until 1882 and was then a farmer. It was upon his farm property that the present City of Witt now stands. Besides being active in Witt Methodist affairs, he built the Witt Hotel, and was founder of the Oland Brick & Tile Company, which in 1906 manufactured drain tile and building brick. He was also director of the old Oland National Bank. He died in 1920.

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DR. CHARLES LOCKHART

Dr. Charles Lockhart, local Witt physician for many years. He came to Witt and practiced many years in this area until his death in 1940. Besides being the family doc-

tor to area residents, he served the community as mayor, school board member and president and bank director. He married Blanche Short and they had three children, Edmund and Charles, who became physicians as their father; and one daughter, Helen. Mrs. Lockhart, also active in community, church and school affairs, died March 27, 1963.

JAMES TORRO

James Torro came to America from Italy in 1881, and to Witt in 1908. Although in earlier years in Illinois he was engaged in mining, he became a merchant in Witt and sold general merchandise in his store on Broadway. His children were James, John, Dom, Minnie, Katherine and Margaret. Mr. Torro was active in Catholic Church affairs and city business and public life. The old Torro residence still stands on Broadway and is now the Frank Bregant home.

John Maxey, Nina, Beauford and Luelah Maxey

John Maxey was born in Witt Township in 1870. His father, Wilson, came from Kentucky in 1836. John attended Witt schools and later became a carpenter. In 1872 he married Luelah Dixon, daughter of Robert Dixon and became involved in the grain and lumber business. In 1905 he joined a partnership known as Carriker & Maxey, Hardware, Groceries and Undertaking.

They had two children, Nina (now Campbell) and Beauford.

WITT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES, CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, CLUBS

A community is its people and its worth is judged by what its people do. Community pride and spirit has always been the first asset of the Witt community and its citizens, both here and living away, have built with pride our churches, schools, businesses, government, clubs, etc. This has made and kept the town. May it long endure.

Aerial View of Witt 1968 Looking North With Lions Park In Center

ST. BARBARA

CATHOLIC

CHURCH

Catholics were among the early settlers of Witt. Because they were few in number, they were unable to establish a church in the community immediately, and so attended religious services in Nokomis.

The opening of the Paisley coal mine in 1897 brought many miners and their families to Witt, and in 1904 the Catholic congregation headed by Andrew Redmond purchased two lots on which to build a church.

Under the leadership of Father Clemens Johannes of Nokomis, and Henry Ernst, the Catholics subscribed enough to purchase the Old St. Louis Church at Nokomis, which was torn down, brought to Witt and rebuilt at a cost of $1,500.

On Sunday, January 8, 1905, the church was dedicated by Father Johannes and named in honor of St. Barbara, the patroness of miners.

The first resident pastor was Father Edmund A. Brodmann, who lived in the Mitchell building until a parish house was built. With the opening of another coal mine in 1906, the original church proved too small for the expanding congregation, and an additional 20 feet was added to the building.

Parish records show that among the first marriages to take place at St. Barbara were those between: Francis Dona and Celestine Zacuboni; Francis Galagher and Mary Kellet; and Walter Grey and Helen McDaniels.

The First Communion records reveal the first entrees to be: John Miller, Blazis Miller, Willie Blake, Joseph Buchels, Anna Reardon, Ellen Reardon, Janette Adamson, Mattie McPherson, Anna Ernst, Katie Burrey and Ada Graham.

Father Brodmann continued as pastor until February 1910, when Father Francis Sheils was appointed pastor. Other succeeding pastors were: Father Michael Mee, Father Bernard N. Manning, Father P. R. Macauley, Father M. J. O'Mullane, Father James Landers, Father R. Terry Shea, and Father Robert Franzen, the present pastor.

Father Manning served St. Barbara's from 1918 to 1933, and Father Landers was pastor from 1936 until his death in 1960. During their long years at Witt, both pastors carried on extensive improvement programs giving it its present appearance which was finalized during the pastorate of Father Shea.

Today St. Barabara's congregation numbers around 100 families, somewhat smaller than the peak days of the mid-twenties when there were more than 140 families in the parish.

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THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

According to a history of Bond and Montgomery Counties compiled in 1882, William Updike and wife moved into the village of Witt in the year 1869. At that time there was no Methodist church organization in Witt nor nearer than 5 miles. The first Sun-

day, Mrs. Updike took a ride through the country and seeing a number of people at work in the fields conceived the idea of organizing a Sunday school. Word was circulated in the neighborhood and the next Sunday saw 8 children and a few grown persons at her house. These she organized into a school and an hour was spent in religious exercises. The next Sunday there were 18 present. The number continued to grow until her house would not contain the crowds. Encouraged by the success of her Sunday School venture, she was determined to organize a church. Rev. John R. Chapman accepted an invitation to preach in her house. A few weeks later the Updike family moved to another house and fitted up the old residence for a place to worship. A 6-weeks meeting was

Witt United Methodist Church

held during which about 30 persons professed conversion, and the church was organized. They continued to meet there until spring, then moved to the warehouse of William Woods. A new church building was erected in 1876. Some of the preachers were Rhodes, Hazen, Stubblefield, Compton, Randall, Lapham, Brooks, Cunningham, Hamill, Muhler and Howard.

After a time the church declined considerably and in the winter of 1896-97 the Pleasant View Church, built in 1870 about 2½ miles southeast of Witt, was moved into Witt and the two congregations united. Ministers serving this church were Waltz, Brewer, Murry, Patrick, Madden, Maxey, McKay, Sutton, Adams, Kaneen, Hull, Eldrigde, Dugan and Cox.

In 1915-16 Rev. C. A. Sullivan came in as a supply minister and the present church was built on the corner of E. Park and N. Second Streets. The cornerstone was laid in 1916 and dedicated May 6, 1917, with Rev. Wm. J. Davidson of Evanston, Ill., preaching the Dedicatory sermon.

In 1939 the Methodist Episcopal Church North, the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Methodist Protestant Church met and formed one new church: The Methodist Church.

In 1952 the church celebrated the 75th anniversary. The pastor was G. E. Baldridge and the sermons were delivered by Bishop J. Ralph Magee and Dr. Raye Ragan. Pastors serving this church since Rev. Sullivan were P. R. Powers, L. G. Adams, J. M. Judy, J. T. Stewart, H. W. Hartman, G. E. Mayo, J. W. Williams, E. E. Shult, G. V. Herrick, John Clarke, Leslie Archer, Robert Evans, Carlos Dunnagan, Henry Nollsch, R. C. Muhleman, G. E. Baldridge, Frank Friesland, Bluford Dawson, Lester Earp, David Lofdahl, Don Doty and the present pastor, Marion Sullins. Two preachers died while serving this charge, Rev. Shult in 1930 and Rev. Earp in 1961.

April 23, 1968, the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church united and formed THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH.

Broadcaster Class

In the year of 1931, a group of young ladies met at the home of Rev. and Mrs. George Herrick, pastor of the Methodist Church. A Sunday School class was organized with the name "Broadcaster". The first president was the late Mrs. Eva (Marfell) Leighs. Miss Pircher was named teacher and still is teaching today. They meet the fourth Friday of every month.

They have been very active since and had many projects to make money, help with finances and bought many things for the church. Some have joined the Grandma Class since then, but are still active. The class lost two members by death, Mrs. Eva Leighs and Miss Anna Berry. There are still many charter members living.

EASTERN ORTHDOX CHURCH

The Hungarian Russian Autonomy Greek Catholic Church of Witt was organized July 12, 1912. On March 31, 1921, its name was changed to St. John's Russian Orthodox Church. At its peak the church had 84 members. Then it dwindled and was closed in 1935, but the parish was served by the pastor of the Benld Parish.

When it was realized that the congregation was too small to reopen the church, one-half the furnishings were donated to Benld which church the remaining members joined.

First Priest: Father Anthony Romja.

Committee Members: John Pobminsky, John Chervinko, John Voytilla.

Choir Director: John Voytilla.

Last Committee Members: Steve Buchko, Pete Koma, George Bronza. Choir Director: Steve Buchko.

The last services held in the church was the marriage of Robert Bates and Veronica Petsic, with Rev. Father Nicolas Semkoff of St. Peter's and St. Paul's Church of Chicago officiating.

Marriage Ceremony Of The Eastern Orthodox Faith

In the Eastern Orthodox Church "Matrimony" is one of the Holy Sacraments and it is very Sacred.

The priest meets the bride and groom in the middle of the church with lighted candles. This is the blessing of the engagement. He gives a lighted candle to the groom and one to the bride. The couple hold lighted candles during the ceremony to show that they pledge before God to follow the light of Truth, Jesus Christ, and that they will have their way through life lighted by the teachings of the Church.

The exchanging of the rings also takes place here. They are placed on the right hand; by exchanging of the rings three times they pledge to share and exchange both their spiritual and physical goods, also eternal love and devotion. The Priest then leads them to the front of the church while the choir sings "Glory To Thee O Lord, Glory To Thee".

An impressive part of the Orthodox marriage ceremony is the placing of the "Crowns" on the heads of the bridal couple. The Priest places the "Crowns" on their heads, saying "O Lord Our God, With Glory and Honor Crown Them, Making Them King and Queen". The "Crowns" are symbolic of the blessing and the grace bestowed by God upon the newly-united couple. They are also symbolic of great honor, along with the responsibilities that attends the establishment of a new Christian family.

After they are Crowned and before all present the blessing of the marriage is done by reading from the Bible the "Letter of Apostle Paul to the Ephesians".

The Bride and Groom drink from a common cup of wine, to indicate that they will mutually share both the happiness and misfortunes of life.

Next the Priest ties the hands of the couple and leds them around the analoy (a small table) three times. They pledge to walk life's pathway together in the way of Christ as symbolized by the Gospel and the Cross on the analoy. He unties their hands and

places the handkerchief on the altar. He continues with a prayer and removes the "Crowns".

He next leads the Bridal Couple before the Holy Altar for the Blessing. Kneeling there he places their heads together, covers their heads with his Stole, he gives them their blessing and says a prayer of "Good Wishes", full of tenderness and cherishable words. Thus ends the ceremony.

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WITT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Witt Presbyterian Church was organized the second Sunday in April, 1875, within the bounds of the Vandalia Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, with Rev. W. J. McDavid as minister and Christian Marks and Wm. Opdyke as elders. Charter members were: Christian Marks, James Marks, Alice Marks, Willa Marks, Maggie Marks, Nancy Marks, Mrs. James Marks, John Lohr, Mrs. Catherine Lohr, Wm. Lohr, Mahala Lohr, Wm. Opdyke, Julia E. Opdyke, Emma Opdyke, Eugene Opdyke, Mary Heersten, W. H. Melrath and Thersa Melrath.

In April, 1884, after a year of Union Sunday School, a resolution was drafted to have a Presbyterian Sunday School, with J. E. Shuping as superintendent. On Dec. 8, 1896, a lot was purchased, and it is assumed that the church was erected the following summer. Previous to this time, since 1873, the congregation held meetings in a building of Mr. Wubker's, general storekeeper.

The church was enlarged, but no record of the date. It stood on a lot in the East side of town, as at that time there were two small villages, Witt and Paisley. It was decided to build a new manse and lots were purchased a block North of the business district which had built up between the two villages.

In 1918 the present manse was built from funds provided by the Ladies Auxiliary. In 1920 the church was moved from the East side to its present location and enlarged. In May 1948, the congregation voted to join the "Presbyterian Larger Parish of the Open Door" of Alton Presbytery. On April 9, 1950, the church celebrated its Seventy-Fifth Anniversary at the Easter Service. Rev. Chas. Collisson was minister at this time.

At the present time, the pulpit is being filled by Mr. George Bruce, student supply, approved by Alton Presbytery. Elders are: Walter Lee, Glen Martin, LeRoy Martin, Russell Masters, Harlan Durston, and Garland Holloway.

WITT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Christian Church was organized and held its first worship service in August of 1955. The ground was purchased in November of 1954, where formerly a Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic building stood. That building was sold, taken down and moved, leaving only a huge pile of debris to be cleared away before building for the new church could begin. After clearing the debris away, it was found that the basement floor of the old building was in good condition and useable.

Work began the following spring in laying concrete blocks for the basement walls. A covering was laid over the basement building to serve the purpose of housing the congregation until the upper structure could be built.

Twenty-one persons attended services when the doors were first opened on Aug. 14, 1955. The church had 13 charter members.

In 1958 the main structure was begun. This was a gradual process as the people of the church did almost all of the labor. In 1964 the building was completed and dedicated to God in a special service on November 8 of that year.

In 1966 a parsonage was purchased on North First Street and rooms were added, making it a modern, three bedroom house.

Additional classrooms were added in the church building in 1966 and 1967 making a total of ten classrooms.

Through the years the church has supported several missionaries and also held membership in camp at Bond Christian Service Camp near Mulberry Grove, Illinois.

Former ministers have included Charles L. Lee, Roy Bakken, George Tietze, Walter Puckett, Ron Simkins, and currently, Wesley Cornell.

The membership of the church now totals 60 with an average morning attendance of 65.

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WITT SCHOOLS

The first school in Witt township was built in 1836 in the southwest part near East Fork Creek, which was probably the first building erected in the township. The first frame school house was Prairie Valley School, built in 1849. The second frame school was the one known as the Maxey School near the center of the township. In 1882 there were seven schools operating in the township on a seven-months basis.

Education in the community proper actually began in two separate units. Witt District No. 66 was an outgrowth of the old Maple Grove School. This one room school was brought in from the Cora Z. Lipe farm located on Section 7 to the Duty 20 acres nearby, but within the edge of the city limits. In the late 1890's, the building was again moved onto land donated by Robert Dixon (father of Mrs. John C. Maxey) where it now stands on the county road near the southeast part of the City leading to the cemetery. In the early 20's, it was divided into two residences which were occupied by the Bregant and Perme families for many years.

The Paisley School was built by George Paisley, himself, in 1895 as District No. 64. It still stands on the original site. In later years it was used by the Witt firemen for their clubhouse. It was still used for educational purposes as late as the 1920's as a school for the Paisley community. On the old frame building of District No. 66 which originally consisted of 2 rooms, a one-room addition was built in 1904. Early Board minutes show that Lizzie Hughes (late Mrs. Barringer) was hired in 1901 to teach the primary grades and in 1902, Mr. B. M. Barringer was hired to teach the upper grades. In 1905, Addie Hanks was

The original Witt School buildings first located on the Cora Z. Lipe farm, and later moved to the East side of Witt.

hired for the primary and E. A. Lewey of Hillsboro was hired to teach Grade 2. The middle grades were taught by Eva Lewis.

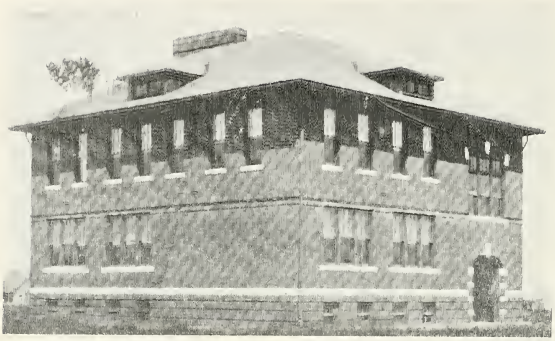
In 1906 several important events took place which affected the school. The Witt District No. 66 and Paisley District No. 64 consolidated to create the new District No. 66. On May 15 of that year the present school building had its beginning when a bond issue was passed for $5,675.00 by the voters and the building was started. The Board of Directors was composed of Messers John Maxey, W. A. Young, Harvey Smith Clickener, John Martin, George Powis and President A. F. Sanders. The meetings were held in the old Oland National Bank. The site was purchased from Alonzo Betty for $1,500.00. The bid of L. M. Moore and Son of Danville, Illinois for $11,434.00 was accepted. By August of 1906 the building was finished to the first joists and in December 1906, two outbuildings (toilets) were built north of the school. Seats were ordered through Carriker and Maxey for $2.50 each and carpenters were paid at the rate of $.25 an hour. Aaron Platts, as chief carpenter was paid $.37½ an hour, but not until it was taken to court after being refused three times for payment.

The new building was ready for occupancy in 1907. Tarney Ivy was sent to the East Building (old No. 66) and Miss Cora Lipe went to the West Building (Paisley). In the new Parkview School were Addie Hanks, Primary; Eva Lewis, Grade 2; Emma Hall, Grades 3 and 4; Mary Watson, Grades 5 and 6; Nonnie Sanders, Grades 7 and 8. In those days teachers received $40.00 and $45.00 per month. E. A. Lewey was to teach all classes in the 2-year High School and to supervise the Grades for $85.00 for the 8-month year. Ethel Cora taught Primary in the West School. In 1908, Edna Barringer was added to the High School faculty to teach English, History, Government and Latin. She coached the only girls basketball team Witt has ever produced. Their only game was with Hillsboro.

In November 1908, an election was held to allow the citizens to vote upon a bond issue to build four new rooms. The issue carried 75-13 and the present rooms occupied by grades 1, 2, 7 and 8 were added to the building.

The 2-year High School became a 3-year High School and in May 1909 there were ten graduates. They were Tom Burris, George Eddington, Ruby Lucas, Naomi Platt Meyers, Columbus Oslett, Beulah Shuping Pierce, Frances Pircher, Clarence Pittinger, Ed Speiser and Nellie Tucker. They are all deceased except Columbus Oslett and Frances Pircher. In 1910 the first 4-year High School was offered in Witt and there were five graduates.

Because of the sinking of the two mines in Witt and north of Witt, plus some industry, the town grew and there became a demand for more classrooms to educate the young. As a result in the year 1913, work began on the North School near the Witt Road at the northern edge of the City. It began accepting



First Construction Of The Present Witt School Begun In 1906

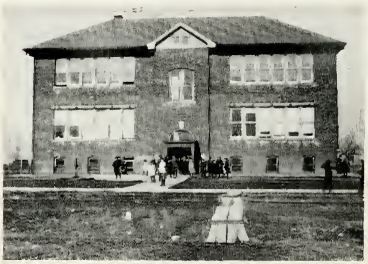
pupils in the Fall of 1914 and was in operation until the late 1920's.

In 1923 the new Anton Avena Building on Broadway was remodeled and used as a school for three or four years. The classrooms there were large and it served only as a temporary measure until the planning and development of the addition to the High School could be realized.

During the 1921-1922 school year, because of financial difficulties, the District was thrown into a non-High School territory. The District retained its 3-year High School, but Seniors were forced to attend neighboring High Schools for their last year (Pana, Hillsboro and Nokomis). The 4-year was again added in 1922-1923 school year.

In the Spring of 1926, construction was begun on the addition to the school which now comprises the High School classrooms and gymnasium. This was done with the able administration of Will A. Green, who served as Superintendent with a longer "tenure" than any other man, 1923-1945. The Board members at that time were: President, John Maxey; Secretary, Wm. Betty; Charles Walcher, Harry Holmes, Henry Hoehn, Charles Martin, and Frank Stauder. The first classes were held in the new High School in the Fall of 1927.

The new gym and High School was an inspiration to the entire community and perhaps added to the school spirit. It served as an inspiration which enabled coach Joe Kilpatrick to take two basketball teams to the State basketball finals in Champaign in 1928 and in 1929. In 1928, the Speedboys won 3rd place in the State tourney by beating Griggsville, 40-26. They had been beaten by Canton by 1 point and Canton went on to win the event. In 1929 they were defeated in their first game by Streator. George and Paul Chervinko, Francis (Buster) Coulson, Al Hanisko, Charles Nuehs, Albert Scharini, Russell Selletto, John Maurer, Frank Korbar and Louis Dean composed the first ten of the original Speedboys who were 3rd place State champs in 1928.



The Old North School, now the Laura Charles Nursing Home.

The depression of the 30's hit the community hard and as a result of mine and industrial closings, the community population decreased. However, the school population remained high but finances were scarce. Teachers were getting less than $100.00 per month and school was on an 8 month basis.

In 1939 the High School graduated its largest class. There were thirty-six graduates. During World War II years, the school did its part by selling bonds and stamps and collecting scrap metals. Both faculty and student alumni served faithfully in the armed forces. Two W.H.S. alumni, Franklin Speiser and Andrew Rodeghier, made the supreme sacrifice and gave their lives for their country.

Superintendent Will A. Green was killed in an auto accident in 1945 as he took a group of boys to Nokomis to a basketball game that Fall.

In the 50's, school consolidation brought in students from rural Pleasant View (Goose Neck), Green Valley, Pleasant Hill and Oak Grove.

In 1956 under Superintendent Harry Walker, both Home Economics and Industrial Arts departments were added to the High School curriculum and in 1958 under his leadership, a new kitchen and cafeteria, and music room was added onto the north side of the building next to the stage.

In the school year, 1964 and 1965, under the present administrator, Andrew P. Sarsany, a new Kindergarten was added to the Unit and the science lab and High School library were remodeled.

The Original Paisley School

Today, the Unit consists of 17 square miles, has approximately 250 elementary students and 100 high school students. There are 18 teachers and an administrator; two custodians; three cooks; and two secretaries. The school is fully accredited by the State and proudly offers studies from Kindergarten through Grades 12. The Board is now composed of: Robert Bates, President, Dale Clayton, Secretary; Keith Furness; Wayne Kuethe; Paul Hamrock; Kathleen Lowe and Elaine Scobell.

Administrators who served the Unit for five years or more include: E. A. Lewey, J. W. White, Will A. Green, Harry C. Walker and Andrew P. Sarsany.

Elementary teachers with long tenure include Julia (Walcher) Coffey; Alta (Skinner) Morse; Helen Borror; Dorothy (Beasley) Parker; Antinena (Repulsky) Weber; Edward Speiser; Charlotte Tucker; Mabel (Chapman) Blackwelder; Frances Pircher; Grace Beckham; Anna Berry; Fanny Thompson; Edith Lee; Addie Hanks; Lizzie Hughes; Lillian Hughes; Helen Durston; Mary Lou

Witt Unit
School District
No. 66
June 1968

Huber; Irma Shore and Stella Zimmer. Miss Grace Beckham probably has the longest consecutive tenure of any—beginning in 1925 in the 1st grade at Witt and still teaching in that position.

High School teachers with long tenure include: Leona (Sturgeon) Richmond; Cora Z. Lipe; Evan Kelly; Malloy Holmes; Richard Adair; Catherine (Pierce) Ball; Edna Barringer; Josephine (Frerichs) Evans; Vera Imogene (Dillman) Sarsany and Betty Morse.

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PARENT-TEACHER CLUB

The first Parent-Teacher Association was organized in 1921, the president was Mrs. Chas. Lockhart. In 1967 the organization was changed to Parent-Teacher Club. The aim of the organization is to promote interest in the study of the problems of children and to advance their welfare. They sponsor many activities to accomplish this. The present membership is 77. The present officers are Pres. Faye Hamrock; Vice Pres., Joyce Shelton; Secretary, Darlene Rogers; Treasurer, Barbara Golitko.

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WITT MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Witt Memorial Library had its beginning in 1953, when Mrs. Robert Hilt received some books from the Nokomis Library that were being disposed of. A building on Broadway, owned by Witt Township, was loaned to a board of seven women, who volunteered to equip a room for a library. It remained in that room until the late Mr. and Mrs. Homer Butler deeded one hundred square feet on North Second Street to be used for a library. The directors raised money to build a concrete block building and with mostly donated help, it was completed and in October 1950 the doors were opened to the public. Donations for blocks were made by soliciting every home in town. These generous donations, plus many from out of town, former residents and interested persons, provided the funds with which the library was built, with the labor being donated.

Many grown ups and children have spent time looking over and checking out books to read. We are not quite a hundred years old, but we hope to be here long enough to reach a hundred. In 1957 the library became tax supported by the township. There are about 6000 books for all ages at the present time.

The first trustees were: Mrs. Dennis Reardon, Mrs. Logan Carr, Mrs. Al Hanisko, Mrs. Fred Reisacher, Mrs. Edward Speiser, Mrs. Simon Lay, Mrs. Robert Hilt, Mrs. Pete Cesarette.

The present trustees are: Mrs. Fannie Thompson, Mrs. Al Hanisko, Mrs. Shirley Tucker, Miss Mildred Read, Mrs. George Nuehs, Miss Cora Lipe, Mrs. Robert Hilt.

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WITT LIONS CLUB

In the Spring of 1960 several representatives of the Nokomis Lions Club met with a nucleus of young men at the Stiehl-Dawson Funeral Home to try to interest the community in a Lions Club of its own. Out of that meeting was organized the Witt Lions Club which was chartered in June of that year. Twenty nine members were registered as Charter members. They are as follows:

Andrew Sarsany, President; Mel Cordani, 1st Vice President; Maurice Stauder, 2nd Vice President; Wayne Kuethe, 3rd Vice President; Arnold Lapsansky, Secretary; John Yuna, Treasurer; Francis O'Malley, Lion Tamer; Leu Schwartz, Tail Twister; Ray Huber, Assistant Tail Twister; George Nuehs, Arthur Weller, Anthony Sinclair, Worth Haycraft, Carl Eddington, Florazel Sparks, Leroy Martin, Earl E. Zimmer, Nicholas Sarsany, William Conway, Jerome Keller, Charles Haycraft, Gerald Tomamichael, Garland Holloway and Lyman Brummet.

In its nine years of history, the club has done an outstanding task of helping the community. It has revived the "ole Witt Labor Days", helped spear-head the Centennial Celebration, and promoted such events as Little League and T-Shirt League for boys, Halloween parades and Easter Egg Hunts for the children. It has raised thousands of dollars which were spent on projects to help the community. Among the most noticeable projects were 1. Street Signs, 2. Medical building, 3. A park with baseball and basketball facilities, 4. A community house, 5. Boulevard beautification, 6. It has donated money for physical equipment, 7. It has helped Witt youngsters by providing eye glasses to those in need, 8. It has given money to the school for various school projects, but most of all, the local Lions Club has given something to the community that cannot be measured in money—It has given it a spark of enthusiasm and the will to make things better for the people who live within.

The motto of the Club is "We Serve" and the Witt Lions have truly tried to do that.

Since 1960 the club has been served by the following presidents: 1960-Andrew P. Sarsany; 1961-Maurice Stauder; 1962-John Yuna; 1963-Louis Nicolotti; 1964-John T. Lowe; 1965-Louis Schwartz; 1966-Allen Marfell; 1967-Lynn Shelton; 1968-Paul Hamrock.

At present the club has 67 members on its roll.

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TONKS-CHRISTOPHER POST 558

The Tonks-Christopher Post 558, American Legion, of Witt, Illinois, was organized March 6, 1920. Mark Tonks and John Christopher were the first Witt men to give their life for their country in World War I. There were sixteen charter members. There are sixty members now.

The Tonks-Christopher Auxiliary Unit 558 was organized March 4, 1924. There were forty-nine charter members. There are fifty-one members now.

Formerly Legion and Auxiliary met at the Miner's Hall, but at different times. On December 10, 1936 the Legion members bought the present building. A complete new front was built in August 1967.

Now the Legion and Auxiliary members meet the third Wednesday night of the month. Each have their separate meetings and then join together for the social hour.

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POCAHONTAS LODGE

Chenowee Council No. 198, Degree of Pocahontas, was organized in Witt in 1921, and have been an active organization ever since. There are still five charter members in the organization: Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Reardon, William Conway, Mrs. Nora Auld and Mrs. Nell Rushford. Organization was in the Red Men Hall, later moving to Cooperative Hall and then Odd Fellows Hall.

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ROYAL NEIGHBORS

Hawthorne Camp 4743 Royal Neighbors was organized in Witt in 1907. Of the charter members, only Lulu Platt remains.

The present membership is 94 and the officers are: Oracle, Kathleen Lowe; Recorder, Mary Hopley; Receiver Frances Pircher.

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Some Early History . . .

Log cabins were primitive. Many times at first the hardened dirt was the only floor. Every community made its own bricks for chimneys, but stones were often used. Oiled paper at the windows allowed some light to enter. Home made candles were lit when absolutely necessary. Sometimes wicks in a dish of grease gave out a dim flicker.

If there was too much rain, hay was good but grain crops poor or impossible to harvest. Drought was worse.

If the elements did not destroy prosperity, rats did their bit. One rat hunt in the early 1870's yielded 15,876 carcasses by actual count.

Witt City Hall

Although settlements in Witt Township were made as early as 1831, it was some time before any formal government was organized in the urbanized area of the township. Records show that the first Village Board was organized on August 25, 1898, and the first board consisted of the following:

Village President ..... Robert Dixon
Treasurer ..... William Shuping
Clerk ..... C. E. Meddy
Trustees ..... Alfred Grugg, Joseph Lee, C. O. Scott, Joseph Hartlieb & William Holmes

Witt continued to have a Village form of government until 1911 and the following served as Village Presidents:

Second Village President ..... William Shuping
Third Village President ..... Elisha Clark

In 1909 a new city hall was constructed at a cost of $4,036 and the urban area moved towards a city form of government. C. E. Bathe served as the first mayor of the city, which became chartered as a city in 1911.

Other major improvements made by the city include:

1. Ordinance No. 79 provided the improvements of Broadway which included laying of bricks. Estimated cost $18,117.05. Year 1917
2. Bond of $16,000 was approved for the construction of Witt's Water Works in 1918.
3. Natural Gas was completed in 1962.
4. Sanitary Sewer completed in 1965.

Men who administered the city as mayor since its incorporation in 1911 are as follows:

First Mayor after incorporation ..... C. E. Bathe
Second Mayor ..... James Shannon
Third Mayor ..... C. M. Woodin
Fourth Mayor ..... Charles H. Lockhart
Fifth Mayor ..... Charles H. Jester
Sixth Mayor ..... Edwin Evans
Seventh Mayor ..... Allen Auld
Eighth Mayor ..... Thomas Rosko
Ninth Mayor ..... Louis Schwartz

At present the city is served by the following offices and office holders:

Front row: Louis Schwartz, Mayor; Francis O'Malley, Alderman; James Auld, Alderman; Back row: Minnie Cadman, City Clerk; Clarence Rufus, Alderman; Glennis O'Malley, City Treasurer. (Missing from picture are Lynn Shelton, Alderman; Thomas Rosko, Alderman; Francis Holthaus, Street Commissioner; Bill Harris, Chief of Police.)

Back row, left to right: Alvin Hoehn, Auditor; Louis Bertolino, Highway Commissioner; Henry F. Hoehn Assessor; J. T. Lowe, Auditor. Front row: Minnie L. Cadman, Supervisor; Edna Tucker, Town Clerk; (Auditor John R. Hilt (Bud), was out of town when picture was taken).

EARLY HISTORY OF WITT TOWNSHIP

In 1872 it was decided to adopt township organization and a committee was appointed to make the division and name the townships. Montgomery county was divided into 18 townships and Township 9, Range 2 was given the name of its largest settlement, WITT.

The following served as Supervisors: Wilson Maxey, 1873 & 1877; H. A. Wells, 1874; E. H. Donaldson 1875; P. C. Abell, 1876; J. T. Armentrout, 1878-1879; Chas. H. Smith, 1880-1881; I. T. Towell, 1882-83-84-87-88 and 1893; Robt. Dixon, 1885-86-1900-1901-1902-1903; Michael Probst, 1889-90-91; Lawrence File, 1892; J. B. Lounsbury, 1894-95; G. W. Armentrout, 1896-97; R. W. Barringer, 1904-05-06; Henry Ernst, 1908-1909; N. W. Taylor, 1907; David Taylor, 1910-1923; Edw. Woodard 1924-26; Walter Rowley, 1926-1930; J. J. Bradshaw, 1930-1936; R. E. Sparks, 1936-40; F. E. Meisenheimer, 1941-45; Donald McLean, 1945-1953; Chris Rodeghier, 1953-1963; Millie Rodeghier completed her husband's unexpired term, 1963-65; Minnie L. Cadman was elected in 1965 and is in office at this time.

Town Clerks: Thos. Vermillion, 1874; J. F. Armentrout 1875-76; J. M. Neisler, 1877-78-79-80; James Barton, 1881-82; F. M. Roberts, 1883; Wm. T. Barry 1884; A. M. Wolford, 1885-86; G. W. Armentrout, 1887-88; C. H. Poland, 1889-90; Geo. Partridge, 1891-95; Mike Baisch, 1896-98; Wm. Lounsbury, 1899-1900-01-02-05-06; Edw. Dixon, 1904; Frank Brockman, 1903 and 1907; U. S. Usher, 1908; J. M. Lounsbury, 1909-10-11; Homer Sawyer, 1912-13; Ralph Short, 1914-1920; W. E. Betty, 1920-1930; Allan Auld, 1931-34; Leonard Jones, 1935-1948; J. R. Worthington, 1948-1950; Verona Lowe 1950-1953; Frank H. Beasley, Sr., 1953-1963; Minnie L. Cadman was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Beasley, 1963-65; Edna Tucker was elected in 1965 and is the present Town Clerk.

Highway Commissioners of the past 20 years are: E. C. Armentrout, Harry Hadley, Alvin Hoehn, Ezra Carter, Edgar Groner, and at the present time, Louis Bertolino.

MARTIN SUPPLY CO.

Martin Supply Co. is situated on the eastern edge of Witt between the Big-4 Railroad tracks and Route 16. It had its beginning in 1946 when LeRoy Martin purchased the lots from John F. Hoehn and Wilber Baxter. At one time, the Witt township shed and Baxter bulk plant stood on the property.

The office and scale of the Supply Co. were built in 1946. In 1948 the elevator was constructed. Almost from the beginning the concern was a success and in succeeding years it expanded in the following fashion:

1. 1950—The Noah Ransdall property on Route 16 was purchased from Jack Holmes and in the following year the Quonset warehouse and grain storage were built.

2. 1958—A fertilizer and blending plant was added.

3. 1958—The old Pete Pircher Standard Station property was purchased and upon it was located bulk feed bins.

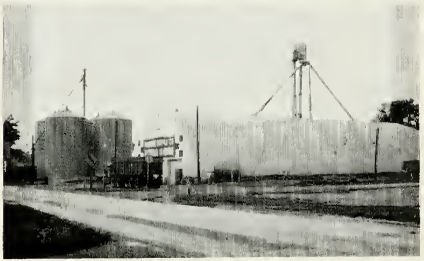
4. 1960—Additional grain storage bins were constructed near the quonset.

5. 1967—A huge feed warehouse was constructed on lots purchased where the Harv. Eddington and Frank Meisenheimer residence at one time stood.

The company is now owned by LeRoy Martin and his wife, Audrey with the assistance of their oldest son, Edward. However, Mr. Martin feels much of the success and and growth over the past years can be attributed to the long and faithful tenure of his employees.

They are: Anna M. Bourey, Eleanor Rundle, Robert Bates, Ralph Degg, Olan Durston, Emery Harston, Paul Hines, Bob Leighs, Harold Schmidt, Alva Schneider, Ed Scobell, and Ralph Speiser.

At present Martin Supply Company is deeply involved in the Agri-business, which comprises the buying and selling of grains, feeds, fertilizers and farm supplies.



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MEL'S BAKERY

Mel Cordani and his brother, Angelo, started the Cordani Brothers Bakery January 15, 1948, in the building formerly occupied by the John Benz Bakery and later by the Joe Cabello Bakery.

Mel had been a baker in the United States Navy during World War II. After his discharge he attended a Baker's Cake Decorating school in Chicago because he planned to specialize in decorated cakes. He has become very successful and delivers decorated cakes to Springfield, Decatur and almost all towns in Central Illinois. Orders have been received from as far as Connecticut, but he refuses to ship decorated cakes by mail because of possible delay and damage in transit.

Mel's mother, Christine Cordani, moved to Witt in 1953 and helped her son in the bakery until May of 1958. She passed away June 8, 1958.

In 1965 Mel purchased the Walter Pyle grocery store building, later occupied by the Ed Speiser harness shop, and remodeled it into a bakery and coffee shop. The coffee shop is an innovation that has proven highly successful.

Later in 1966 Mel purchased the Ed Groner building and remodeled it into the Township Supervisor's office and Frank Bregant's Barber Shop. Remodeling these two properties has done much to improve the appearance of Broadway.

September 4, 1948, Mel married Lovel Moreland Dean, the widow of Warren Dean. To the Cordani couple four children were born: Toni, age 18, now a state employee in Springfield; Mel Jr., age 16, a 1969 senior of Witt High School; Eileen, age 15, a H. S. Junior and Joseph, age 11 of the Witt Junior High School. Of the Dean children: Tom, age 24, married Carol Keller of Nokomis, Nov. 8, 1964. They are the parents of one son, Aaron Todd, born September 28, 1966. Tom is employed at the Firestone Tire Company in Decatur; Sue Dean, age 21, is in the Woman's Marine Corps and is now stationed at Parris Island, South Carolina.

Tom and Sue are the grandchildren of Homer and Zola Dean.

Both the Dean and Cordani children have helped Mel in the Bakery and Coffee Shop.

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WITT DRY GOODS

The present Witt Dry Goods Store was begun when Fred Pfertner built that general store under his name in 1905. Mr. Pfertner operated the business until 1945 when it was sold to Ollie Sherman. He in turn sold it to Roy Mansfield in 1948. The present owner George H. Fisher, re-opened the business in 1955, a year after Mansfield closed the doors.

Mrs. Matilda Rehner became the manager of the concern when it opened in 1955 and has operated the business since that day. The store specializes in shoes and clothing for the family, white goods for the home, and abundant variety of yard goods, variety items as well as other household items.

Mrs. Rehner is assisted by Miss Alma Klein, who has worked in that store under the various owners for 49 years, beginning in the year 1918.

HAYCRAFT GROCERY

Worth Haycraft began business in the fall of 1945 in the building now occupied by Ponto's Tavern. In December of 1950 he moved his business to the business that is now the Lowe Coin Wash. In 1951 he moved to his present location which was the late W. E. Betty Grocery and Meat Market. Haycraft's not only have a complete line of groceries and meat, but also buy eggs from the farmers in this area.

Worth and Ruby are the parents of two children, Charles and Shirley. Charles and wife, Karen, live in Edwardsville and Shirley is the wife of Ben Wilhouse of Witt. They also have one grandson, David Eric, son of Charles and Karen.

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MILLER'S STANDARD STATION

The Standard Station was opened by John J. Miller, his wife, Anna, and their children on November 25, 1951. John attended grade school in Witt, then moved to Chicago, where he met and married Anna Mrkvicka.

They had three children, Eugene J. of Montana, Donald of Streemwood, Ill., and Arlene, now Mrs. Arthur Ulrici of Witt. The Ulricis have three children, Rex, Rusty and Gale.

Mr. Miller passed away December 18, 1967. Mrs. Miller continues to operate the Station.

NORTHERN PROPANE GAS CO.

Northern Propane Gas Co. was first started as Stauder Gas Co. by Mr. M. F. Stauder in 1955 at Witt. In 1959 he built a sub plant at Raymond, Ill. He operated these two plants until Jan. 1, 1963 when he sold out to Northern Propane Gas Co. of Omaha, Nebraska.

Four of the Stauder Gas Co. employees work for the Northern Propane. They are: Kenneth Braye, now the manager; Dorothy Rogers, bookkeeper; Don Huber, driver; Joe VandenBergh, driver; and in 1967, Tom Bogle was also hired as a driver by Northern Propane Gas. Co.

When Mr. Stauder operated this plant, he sold only gas tanks, bulk and bottled gas. Northern Propane has expanded out into all types of Gas appliances, such as—water heaters, space heaters, furnaces, air conditioning, and eusutation.

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SHELTON ELECTRIC

Everett Shelton, proprietor of Shelton Electric, graduated from L. L. Cook Electrical School in Chicago in 1932. Almost immediately he began to operate his electrical concern, while operating his farm Southwest of Witt.

In 1947 he took a refresher course in electrical work in Chicago. In 1961 he decided to leave farming and it was then he set up his shop in the Odd Fellows building, Third and Broadway, where it is now located.

Shelton Electric specializes in all types of electrical work, which includes motor and pump repair, and and commercial wiring.

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CABELLO DRUG STORE

The building owned and occupied by Joe Cabello Jr., was built by Telesphore Coderre in 1918. Mr. Coderre was a druggist and occupied the building until his death. Robert O'Brien ran the drugstore until such a time that the Coderre estate was settled. When the drugstore was sold in 1923, Louis Spinner bought the building and its contents. Mr. Spinner owned the building until he sold it to Joe Cabello, Sr., in 1944. Mr. Cabello started a drug and Sundry store in 1947. Since Mr. Cabello's death June 2, 1967, his son, Joe Jr., and his wife, Judy, are operating the business.

SAM LEE'S STORE

Sam Lee's store came into existence March 24, 1887, in its present location. The building had two owners previous to being bought by Samuel Lee in 1887, from John Tratt. Mr. Lee was born in Sommersetshire, England in 1854, and came to the United States with his parents in 1868, locating at Brighton, Illinois. They came to Witt Township in 1882, locating on a farm two miles east of Witt.

Mr. Lee married Dealia Balsley in 1889 and they resided for a time in a small home, still standing, on the former William Degg property in old Witt. The Balsleys came to Witt Township in 1852, from Virginia, having lived a short time in Indiana and also located on a farm just east of Witt. Mr. Sam Lee operated huckster wagons in the 1890's and hauled chickens and eggs to Irving. The firm continued the huckster business until 1968. First they used horse drawn vehicles, then in 1917 converted to trucks, most of the time with two outfits.

Earl and Harold Lee have spent their lives in the grocery business to the present time.

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WITT ELEVATOR

The Witt Elevator had its beginning in 1898 under the name of Short and Ernst. In 1913, Charles P. Zimmer came to Witt from Waterloo, Illinois, where he bought a half interest in the concern then named the Paisley Elevator Co. The new concern was called Ernst and Zimmer and continued to operate as such until 1937 when the Zimmer family became sole owners.

Charles and Minnie Zimmer had three sons: Earl (July 30, 1910) who married Roseila Molleman of Hillsboro, and they have three daughters, Jean, Ida Lou, and Ruth Ann: Raymond (March 12, 1913) who died in 1932; and Albert (May 5, 1916) who married Stella Kolik of Ramsey and they have three children, Helen, Charles and Linda.

Mr. Zimmer died August 16, 1955 and Mrs. Zimmer died on December 23, 1963.

SECURITY NATIONAL BANK OF WITT

The Security National Bank of Witt has had a long and interesting history which dates back to the turn of the century. It was shortly after 1900, when a group of business men under the leadership of Alonzo Betty, organized the Oland National Bank of Witt. It was housed in a frame structure where Ponto's Open Door now stands. In later years it became the First National Bank of Witt.

In 1912 still another bank had its beginning in Witt under the name of the Witt National Bank. Henry Fesser became the President and Charles Ralston its first cashier.

The newly organized bank operated under this name for five years, but in the fall of 1927 the two banks merged. The First National Bank and the Witt National Bank combined to form the National Bank of Witt.

Actually, the present Security National Bank of Witt came into existence as a result of this merger in 1927, but in reality the bank did not get its present name until 1932, when a reorganization took place and then the National Bank of Witt became the Security National Bank of Witt, the name which it retains yet today. The directors at that time were: Henry F. Fesser, President; Henry Ernst, Dr. C. H. Lockhart, Fred W. Pfertner, Frank Stauder, Henry C. Weber, Charles P. Zimmer and Homer Armentrout, Cashier.

The bank has always maintained a good financial background through sound financial policies. It has prospered through the years and today, 1968, its assets total in excess of 3½ million dollars. The present board of directors include: Earl Zimmer, President; Mel Brueckner, Vice President and Cashier; Albert Zimmer, Everett Carriker, John Hoehn, Clarence Doerr, and Olin Snyder. Miss Dorothy Wittnam serves as Assistant Cashier and Tellers are Mrs. Tillie Chervinko, Mrs. Glennis O'Malley and Miss Carolyn Miller.

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FRANK'S BARBER SHOP

Frank Bregant attended Decatur Barber College. In 1950 he apprenticed under the late Roy Zepp, who barbered in Witt for over 60 years. On Roy Zepp's retirement, Frank purchased the business and is still barbering. In December 1966 Frank moved to his present location in a newly remodeled shop in the Mel Cordani building.

Frank is married to the former Evelyn Davis. They are the parents of five children and have ten grandchildren.

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ANDRUS STORE

Harold J. Andrus is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edd Andrus. When he returned from service in World War II, he married Rachel Britten of West Frankfort, Illinois. With the assistance and guidance of Harold's father, the young couple opened a clothing store in the Zimmer Building in 1948. The Zimmer Building now houses the Lowe Coin Wash.

In 1950, they moved to the Levi Houck Building, formerly occupied by the Bob Lewin Clothing Store.

Edd Andrus had been employed for years

in the Fred Pfertner Store, where the two son were trained under the watchful eye of their father, in whose footsteps they both followed. Floyd has been associated with Corps Incorporated for 43 years and is now located in Pontiac, Illinois.

Mrs. Hannah Nuehs has clerked in the Andrus Store for several years. Also helping are Mrs. Evelyn Degg and Mrs. Ineta Lowe.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrus wish to express their appreciation for the patronage of the Witt Community, which has made it possible for them to maintain an up-to-date store.

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JOE AND JOANNE'S BAR

Old time saloons still dot Witt's Broadway as a reminder of twenty or more taverns that served thirsty coal miners long ago.

Joe and JoAnne's Bar is a descendent of those "good ole days". Its environment, both in and out, are reminiscent of that era. This saloon is the oldest in operation in Witt and within it's walls are harbored much of that which is now Witt history.

The present Joe and JoAnne's Bar got its beginning before the 1900's when the original owners, Joe and Tony Seletto began as Seletto's Saloon. Later operators include John Truhan and Jack Bolding.

Today the old saloon is the oldest tavern in operation and it is operated by JoAnne and Joseph Martin. Mrs. Martin is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Bolding of Witt Illinois, and Joseph Martin is the son of Mrs. Helen Martin, Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey. They have one daughter, Jackie.

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CARL ERNST GARAGE

The garage, built in 1913, was owned and operated by Fred Hoehn until 1919. Carl Ernst worked there from 1919 until 1935, when he purchased the garage. He has been owner and operator ever since.

Carl came to Witt with his parents in 1901, attended Witt School and Decatur Business College. He served in World War I in the U. S. and France. He is a member of St. Barbara's Church, Witt Lions Club, American Legion and Moose Club of Hillsboro.

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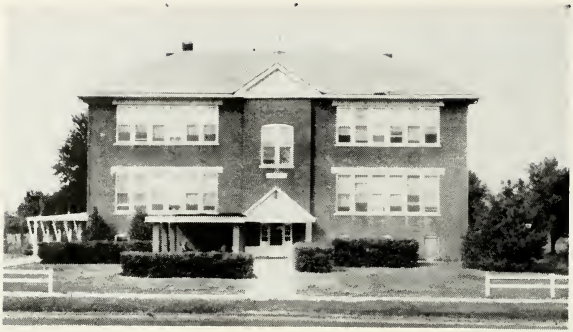
WELLER'S CAFE

Weller's Cafe is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Art Weller. They are parents of four children: Betty Borgic, Harold Weller, Joyce Ondrey and Gary Weller. Mrs. Weller is the former Bernadine Niehause. They have seven grandchildren.

They lived most of their married life on the farm owned by Mr. Weller's parents, Bob and Estella Weller, before buying their home in Witt and moving to Witt in 1959.



LAURA CHARLES

NURSING

HOME

The Laura Charles Nursing Home, formerly the North School, was built in 1924. In the 1950's it was converted into a nursing home. The building has 14 rooms plus a TV room, kitchen, dining rooms, bathrooms, utility rooms and laundry room.

It was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. James D Rogers of Cape Girardeau, Mo., on December 1, 1964. They are the parents of six children: Paul, born in 1947, 21 years old, now in the Air Force stationed at Washington. D. C. He is married to the former Shirley Conrad and they are the parents of a baby daughter, Paula Ann, 2 months old. Steven, born in 1949, 19 years old, now in the Marines stationed at Viet Nam. Glenn K., born in 1952, 16 years old, a Junior at Witt High School. Dennis J., born in 1955, 13 years old, in the 7th grade at Witt School. Debra, born in 1956, 12 years old, in the 7th grade at Witt School. David D., born in 1967, 17 months old.

Mrs. Lucinda Winter of Witt, who will be 101 years old, is Laura-Charles' oldest resident, and Mrs. Bertha Osborn, 57 years old, is the youngest.

There are now 30 residents at the home.

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Do you remember? . . .

The Witt Mercantile Co. was begun when it was built and operated by the Burnwill Coal Co. In later years it was taken over by the miners and became the Witt Cooperative Store. It was there that butcher Sam Patterson met his wife, Alma Chapman who clerked there. Other employees were Henry Scobell, Louis DeLuka and Alice Anders.

Aerial View Of Witt 1968, Looking North With School And Water Tower In Center

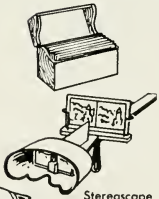
Kerosene lamp

Gaslight fixture

PRICELESS TREASURES AND MEMENTOS

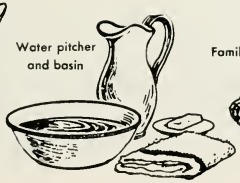
This book could hardly be complete without including pictures and stories from past history which has added color, humor, interest and character to the Witt community and its people. They could hardly be included in the History proper, but because they left such an indelible mark, we leave them to share with you and our posterity.

Phonograph



Stereoscope and slides

Bathtub



Water pitcher and basin

Family album

This was the Witt ball team in 1904. We do not know the name, only Witt team. Front row, B. Boulger, H. Bower, Jim Hope, L. Wignwll and Jerry Sullivan; second row, E. Grimes, J. White, S. Stupeck and W. Lewis; standing, Dave Lewis, Harvey Smith and Sandy Cowan.

During the W.P.A. days there were many schools run by the W.P.A. This one was for citizenship to help those who needed help with getting their citizenship papers. There were many things they did not understand about the government. Some could not read nor write in English, although they were very good in their own language. This school was carried on for several years with Eugene Shelton as their teacher and his helper was Everett Brummet. Leo Comerford was Supt. over the District. This school was started in 1936.

Those sitting: first man unknown, Andy Shemeline, Mrs. Vavrak, Mrs. Buchko, Mr. Buchko, Mr. Chervinko, next unknown, Harry Kilby, Mrs. Brutovsky, and Mrs. George Rosko, next two unknown. Back row, Everett Brummet, Leo Comerford and Eugene Shelton.

Mrs. John Goulden, Mrs. George Bronzia, Eugene Shelton, next two women unknown, George Bronzia, man unknown. There were hundreds of people who received their citizenship papers through this school.

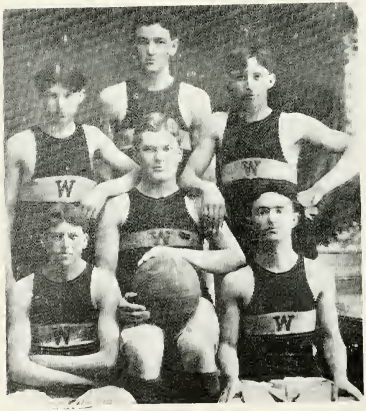
Out for a ride on a Sunday afternoon--Tom Shelton, Charlie Shelton, and Jerry Sullivan This was the only way young folks had of traveling and on Sunday you would see many out riding. A young man with a nice horse and buggy was sought after.

Getting ready to play ball in 1900. There is a number of them we do not know. Those we recognize are Tom Lindsay, Bill Rushford, Charlie Shelton, Eugene Shelton, Ed Evans, Harry Holmes, . . . Evans (cousin of Ed Evans) and Jake Hartline.

Rock pile and trucks used in making hard road through Witt in 1924. The cement was poured the last week of July. This rock pile is at the place where Martin's Elevator office now stands.

First Girls Basketball team of the Witt school in 1908.

Front row: Beulah Shuping, Ruby Lucas and Tessie Gardels O'Dowd. Back row: Ethel Fox Hammak and Adelia Platt Meinzer.



First boys Basketball team in Witt school in 1908.

Front row: John Fox, Clarence Pittenger, Rollo Chapman. Back row: John Blake, Elbert Armentrout, George Eddington.

The Greek Orthodox Church was moved from Nokomis and rebuilt here in 1912. Church services were held for many years. It was torn down in the 1950's and since then a new Christian Church has been built.

Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Smith—Mrs. Smith was the former Ida Strider who taught the old Witt School when the school stood on the corner south of Witt, where the Arnold Duty home now stands.

Of all the pupils she taught, only two are still living—they are Mrs. Lizzie Hartlieb Singler of Nokomis and Walter Lee.

This store was operated by Jcs. Lee. Prior to that it was once a restaurant, and later was opened as a Shoe Store run by Chas. Balsley. The horse and wagon was used for deliveries.

The small building was the James Zepp Barber Shop. Roy Zepp is standing by door.

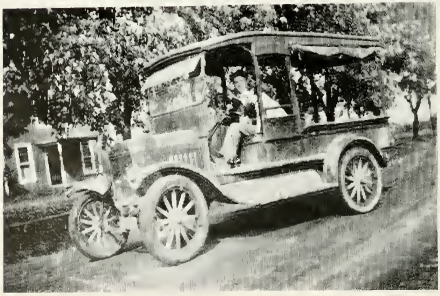
This picture of Dr. Lockhart was taken in front of the old Fred Pfertner Dry Goods Store. His office was in rooms above the store. Dr. Lockhart lived in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Will Shuping until his aunt Sarah Wilton came to live with him. They lived in the house next to the Shupings until he built the house on North Stuart Street, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Hank Brummet. He later built the big house on Second Street, now owned by Mr and Mrs. Russel Sperry.

Broadway looking east, showing old bandstand. The house on right was owned by John Benz, who also owned the Bakery next door. The house was later moved to North Second Street and is now owned by Mel Cordani.

This is a picture of the old M. E. Church built in 1870, as it looked when it was moved from the Gooseneck community in 1895. It remained in old Witt until 1916 when a new church was built on Second Street, two blocks north of Broadway.

When they moved to town, they united with the Methodist Protestant group, which had been started by Mrs. Wm. Opdyke in 1876.

Water flows during drilling process. In 1916 the city started drilling for water, and you can see the flow of water coming from pipe line. This is about one mile east of Witt across the creek where the Water Works now stand. Witt Water Works now supply water not only for the City of Witt, but also Irving, and farmers of Irving, Witt and Nokomis communities.



Lee's Grocery delivery truck, driven by Shirley Tucker. Lee's Grocery was one of the oldest stores in old Witt. Shirley Tucker was clerk and delivery boy for many years.

The Hotel was run first by the Temple family, and later sold out to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Brookman, who sold to the Groner family and then to the Ed Woodard family. The exact date of when it was built is not known, but was about the same time as the Fred Pfertner store, the Miners store, and the Mitchell building.

Crowd waiting for the show to open, when you could see a movie for ten cents. These were silent movies. Tom and Ben O'Dowd owned the theater. The picture showing was a double feature — "Brave Deeds" and "Tommy Saves His Father".

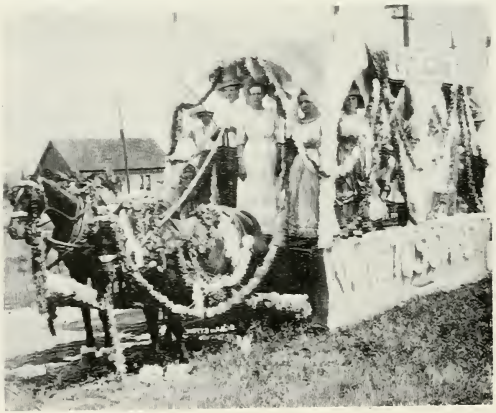
One of the oldest and first cars in Witt was owned by Anton Avena, owner of Avena's Grocery Store. In the car is Alex Avena, Genevieve Williams, Vernon Busby and friend. Wilbur Baxter and C. E. Bathe were also some of the first car owners in town.

These two houses are the only two houses still standing that were in the old original town of Witt. This house is now owned by Jesse Schoenieweise and was formerly owned by Arba Litticker, grandparents of Lura Tucker. The house is over 100 years old.

This house is now owned by the Eugene Shelton family. It was owned by his grandfather, Wm. Holmes, who purchased the place from Jacob and Hannah Miller. In 1869 it was owned by William Opdyke. The Opdykes held church services here until a church was built. From all records, we judge this place to be somewhere about 125 years old.

This is a float in the 1912 parade, entered by Jack White's Cafe.

Those standing are Pearl Holmes Hope, Jack White, Mrs. White, Roxie Holmes Sullivan, Gwendolyn Clancy Powis and the Whites' little daughter. This was one of the prize floats



MINE NO. 1

In 1879 George Paisley bought a section of land in Witt Township and in 1894 he purchased more land southwest of the original town of Witt. With T. A. Padden he sank a coal mine that later became No. 12 of the Indiana, Illinois Coal Co. mines.

Financial interests connected the Big Four Railroad, after purchasing mine No. 12, sank a new mine one-half mile north of the town of Witt. By 1906 they were hoisting coal. It was in operation until Armistice Day, 1918. Several different companies operated the mine. The superintendent of the mine when it closed was William T. Haywood.

In those days the miners had to walk to work and there were no wash houses—the men had to wash at home. This was a bitter experience, especially in the winter with snow and ice on the ground.

MINE NO. 2

This picture was a bunch of men from Paisley who formed a comic band to be in one of Witt's Labor Day parades. The only one we recognize is Joe Morris holding the goat. The sign on the cart reads Cora and Zucco — First and last chance. Ocean side saloon. Drop in. men. 6 for 25 cents. This was taken by the side of the club saloon in Paisley.

These are top men who worked at mine No. 14.

The only one we recognize is Noah Ransdell.

Livery barn owned by Rufus Barringer. Mr. Barringer is in center of picture holding horse's head. The others are unknown. This barn was south of Broadway where the present lumber yard now stands, but it was facing the railroad.

This burro belonged to the Powis family—also the hack. The picture was taken in front of the Oland Hotel. The sign on porch reads "Rates by day". The girl in cart is Pearl Holmes Hope, but we do not recognize the men.

LABOR DAY

MORNING

1909

The large lump of coal was brought up out of the mine the day before, and weighed 2,000 pounds. Some of the men in the picture are Jesse Cook, Arthur Fox, Bob Purdy, Tom Seddon, Peter Griffiths, Walter Lee, Harry Holmes, Teddy Whitley, Tom Shelton, Joe Reardon, Iva Fox, John Worthington, Auston Dodd, Jos. Yearsley and Jack Holmes.

These mules were brought up out of the mine to be used in the parade. They were used in the mine to pull the coal cars. The Deering Coal Co. owned the mine at this time.

Sam Paslavsky Dry Goods and Clothing Store and Carriker Grocery

Sam Paslavsky came to Witt about 1904 and started in business in the building which was later the Fesser Butcher Shop. In a few months the Odd Fellows built a new building and he moved into it. A few years later he built the big building in the picture. He also built a nice home known as the Walter Pyle home on West Broadway. The store building has been used by the Lions Club for several years.

The Carriker Store was first known as Carriker & Maxey, and was moved from the old original Witt.

These are pupils and former teachers who attended the reunion Aug. 23, 1963, of the old school, Pleasent View, better known as Gooseneck.

This old school was once part of the first settlement in Witt township, near the old cemetery and the M. E. Church which was moved in to Witt many years ago. The school has also been torn down. Two of the teachers who taught in this school are still living, Mrs. Mae Fox Pyle, now living in Laura Charles Nursing Home, and Mrs. Edna Pyle Hubbard, wife of Dr. E. D. Hubbard, now living in Florida. There could be others we do not know about. These two mentioned attended the reunion.

Pictured are, front row, Orville Carriker, Mrs. Edna Hubbard, Mrs. Mae Pyle, Edith Armentrout, Ethel Carriker, Deana Compton Collins, Mrs. Ethel Armentrout, Mrs. Alta Armentrout, Edna Hoehn; Standing, George Bote, Dr. E. D. Hubbard, Russel Armentrout, Harry Carriker, Henry Collins, Ina Carriker, Eugene Shelton, Bertha Brummet Shelton, Elbert Armentrout, Margaret Rushford Hoehn, Alvin Hoehn, Henry Huber and Mrs. Huber, Mary Thumb Armentrout, Leslie Armentrout and Homer Armentrout.

A number of the pupils are still living, but were unable to attend the reunion.

These two men were marshalls who headed the miners parade on Labor Day. The man on the left was Charles Dunaway, better known as Cherokee, and Will Hartline (his wife was Nellie Culberson Hartline). These men were brothers-in-law. Horse on right was owned by Harry Holmes.

Watch tower once stood across road from the car wash. George Welch was the operator. It was later moved east of the Lee crossing, across the road from the junk yard.

It burned when the buildings across the street burned in the big Witt fire.

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This was the First Aid Class held for men in Witt, during the years of 1936 and 1937 under the direction of the W.P.A. Classes were held once a week. Teachers were Eugene Shelton and Charles Holloway. Pictured are, front row, first two are unknown, Wm. Auld, Henry Vollmer and Jos. Yearsley, back row, Eugene Shelton, Sam Bogle, C. DeLuka, Charles Holloway, teacher, and the woman was also a teacher from the Red Cross.

This was the Women's First Aid Class held once a week with Charles Holloway as teacher. The first woman is unknown, next is Ava Rufus Hilt, Molly Hartline; standing, Grace Hartline Scobel, Agnes Lowe, Charles Holloway and Bertha Shelton.

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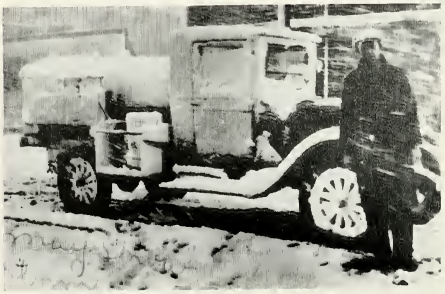
The Oland National Bank was organized by Alonzo Betty soon after the towns of Witt and Paisley were united in 1905. The early officers of the bank were: Robert Dixon, President; Dr. Chas. H. Lockhart, Vice President; Henry F. Hoehn, Cashier; and Directors were Robert Dixon, Dr. Lockhart, Jesse Osborn, Fred Mitchell, H. F. Hoehn, J. E. Hilt and Luke Weber.

The Witt Depot was once across the road from the Lynn Shelton home and the old Fred Pfertner and Avena store buildings. Both Witt and Paisley had depots but the railroad objected to two depots within a mile. When Witt and Paisley became one village, a new depot was built at the east end of Broadway across from Mine No. 12. After we no longer had passenger service, it was torn down and moved to Rountree township where it is used as a Sportsmen's Gun Club House.



Bill Conway and his Standard Oil truck during a snow storm on May 2, 1929. Bill bought out the business from Robert Hiller in 1927 and retired at the age of 65. He delivered Standard products in Witt and the surrounding country. This is the first new truck he owned.

Teenagers of yesterday—Regina Pircher Conway, Grace Powis, Freda Pircher Cadman, Ruth Beasley Powis, Frances Pircher, Alta Beasley Perry, Eva Marfell Leighs and Bertha Brummet Shelton.

Quite a contrast in styles of then and now.

The old livery barn owned by Bennet Leach at the time this was taken. It stood where the Library now stands. The man holding the white mule is Eligh Robertson and man with cane holding team is Jesse Kithcarth.

Broadway on a busy day showing Tony Selleto's Saloon, Wm. Betty's Grocery and Meat Market, Brown's Tailor Shop, O'Dowd's Picture Show and the Oland Hotel. These are some of the oldest buildings on Broadway, when the open Fords and Chevys were in style.

Labor Day Parade showing horse drawn carriage with mayor and speaker of the day. Richard Holmes, Marshall of the day, is riding horse. One hundred miners marched in the parade. The Miners' Union sponsored the Labor Day.

James Redmond

Jim Redmond was born in Queens County, Ireland on May 8, 1870 and came to Witt shortly before the turn of the century. After his arrival here, he first worked in the mines and later operated Redmond's Saloon in Paisley. He also owned and operated a soda pop bottling works in Paisley. He was assisted by the late James Mullin along with a concrete business which they operated. It was concrete from this business that went into the laying of many of Witt's sidewalks and the old Witt Water Tower. He was instrumental in the building of St. Barbara's Catholic Parish in Witt, and the cemetery. He also served as city councilman. Mr. Redmond died Nov. 19, 1917

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Alonzo A. Betty

To this man belongs a large part of the credit for the present city of Witt. For it was he who was one of the promoters.

He was born in Litchfield township Jan. 18, 1853, a son of Isaac and Louisa Betty, natives of Tennessee. He was raised on a farm in Butler Grove. In 1895, he came to Witt which was then a cluster of buildings. It was largely through his efforts that the city of Witt began to develop. He aided in the coal mine development and became Vice President and director of the Montgomery Coal Co. He organized the Oland National Bank and the Oland Brick and Tile Co. He laid out the Oland Park addition to the city, which now includes Broadway and the principal part of Witt. He also laid out the second Cromer addition to the city. He entered the real estate business and built many of Witt's finest residences. He owned the property upon which the Witt School is now located.

He had five children: Roy, Elmer, William, Lincoln and Ralph. William, better known as Bill, operated a store and meat market on Broadway for many years.

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Supt. of Streets Richard Brummet and two of his helpers, Fred Brummet and Henry Grantham, when the sidewalks and all crossings were cleaned after every rain and snow. This was taken soon after they had finished planting the trees in the city park. Some were not present when the picture was taken.

Dr. I. W. Burns, with his family, came to Witt in the early 1900's, and had a drug store with his office in the rear. He lived in the rented property now owned by Bill Degg, and later he built the home now owned by Al Lowe.

In 1913 or 1914 they moved to Roanoke, Virginia. Dr. Burns died of a heart attack on a train going to a small town where he had been called.

When he left Witt he sold his drug store to Dr. T. Coderre, who later built a new store, now Joe Cabello's.

Dr. and Mrs. Burns had three daughters, Marian, Lucia and Bernice, and one son, Thomas.

Redmond's Saloon in Paisley

About the turn of the century, Jimmy Redmond established a saloon in Paisley near the Ernst-Zimmer Elevator on property which is now the Larry Lowe residence. The famous Blue Goose Saloon was a block away. Pictured above are Jimmy Redmond, Billy McGuane, unidentified man, Thomas Hadley Sr., Jim Clydesdale, Allen Auld, Peter, Joe and Jim Diggle, unidentified man and Andy Redmond at far right.

A train pulling into the Witt depot years ago when old Witt was located along the Big Four tracks. Houses in the background are those located along what is now Route 16.

Some Photos From The Album Of Dr. Lockhart

The building which housed Dr. Lockhart's office. It was located on the corner of Rodgers and Hirst Streets, across from what is now the Lynn Shelton residence. Fred Pfertner maintained the dry goods store below. The office was upstairs.

The Old Paisley Depot. (Men Unidentified)

Interior of Dr. Lockhart's office shortly after 1900.

Old Witt located along the Big Four railroad tracks as it appeared shortly after the turn of the 20th century. Many of the buildings were destroyed by a great fire which occurred years later.

Witt Depot
As It Was Located
In Old Witt
Near Lee's Store

The first school in Witt. It was brought in from the country and located east of town near the Leo Verricker property.

The original Witt Methodist Church brought in from the country and located one block east of Lee's crossing before it was torn down

St. Barbara's Catholic Church at its present location, and as it was brought from Nokomis

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Miss Cora Lipe going for a hay-ride with some of her pupils. Miss Lipe was teacher in Witt Schools for many years. In this picture are Miss Lipe and the pupils we recognize are Eva Marfell Leighs, Velma Spooner, Grace Powis and Leslie Armentrout.

Stauder & Hoehn float in a Labor Day Parade about 60 years ago.

Dixon & Shupping Elevator located on what is now Route 16 across from Lee's Store.

Paisley Elevator shortly after 1900 and what is now the Zimmer Elevator.

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Some Scenes In Witt Taken In The Year Of Our Centennial — 1968

Mayor Louis Schwartz and Postman Arnold Lapsansky dedicate the signs placed on the east and west approaches to the city beginning the 1968 Witt Centennial. The signs were made and installed by Mr. Lapsansky.

U. S. Post Office On Broadway In Witt

With the building of the Indianapolis And St. Louis R. R. in 1869, the village of Witt came into existence. The first store was opened by William Wood and in it was also placed the first Post Office. The first postman was a man by the name of Keys. George Paisley secured a Post Office for Paisley after the turn of the century and the first postman there was Miss Kate Daly.

However, after a bitter struggle, the two villages fused and there became one Post Office. At present it is located on Broadway in the Joe Cabello building. Mr. Arnold Lapsansky is Postman and Mrs. Doris Lapsansky is assistant. John Yuna is rural mail carrier.

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Population Sign on the western approach to Witt on Route 16 showing population in 1968

Park house and pavilion constructed on West Broadway in the early 1960's by the Witt Lions Club. The park and buildings are used by the community for social affairs.

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Witt's Oldest Citizen

Mrs. Lucinda Winter, mother of retired teacher, Mrs. Fanny Thompson, will celebrate her 101st birthday September 21 of this year. She was born in 1867 in Saline County, Illinois and came here to live with her daughter, Fanny, in 1964, and is now a patient at the Laura Charles Nursing Home in Witt.

Pumping And Water Softening Station

Witt's water system was first approved for construction in 1918 at a cost of $18,000. The pumping station is located Northeast of the city and the tower in the original Witt Park across from the school. In the early 1950's water softening was added and a new tower constructed to replace the old concrete tower.

Sanitary Lagoon For Sewage Disposal

The latest improvement to the city was the construction of the sanitary sewer in 1965 at a cost of approximately $350,000. It was completed only through a grant from the Federal government which financed almost one-half of the cost. The lagoon is located along Route 16 about one-half mile north of the city.

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The unique feature of the Witt business section has long been the boulevard on Broadway. Built in 1917, at the same time bricks were laid for sidewalks and street. New sidewalk and blacktopping was accomplished in the early 1960's.

Street signs were a new addition to the city in 1966. Finances for their purchase, as well as the actual planning and installation was by the Witt Lions Club.

Medical Building on Third and Broadway, built by the local Lions Club through the help of local citizens. It was built in 1965 in an effort to secure a physician for the community.

In May shortly before the 1967-68 school year ended, the entire student body and faculty celebrated Centennial Day. All were dressed in clothes appropriate for the occasion and class studies and displays were geared for the event. The picture shows the grade school pupils in Centennial clothes on the playground west of the school.

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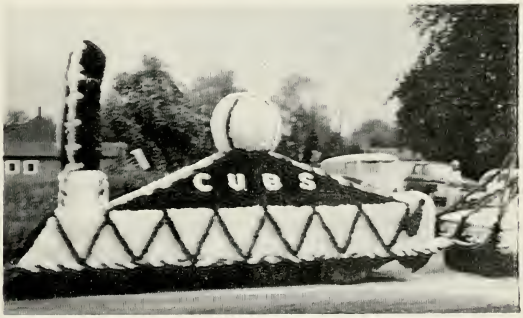
In 1960 the Witt Lions Club began the renewal of the Ole Witt Labor Days. With the help of the people of the community and the surrounding area, they have rebuilt a Homecoming celebration that equals or surpasses those of by-gone days. Shown here are prize winning floats and parade entries.

Witt Labor Day 1966

Mel's Bakery

Little League



Security National Bank

of Witt

The Sycamore pictured was planted on the Christopher Armentrout property in the 1840's. He was the third permanent settler in Witt township upon what is now the John Armentrout farm. This tree is now over 125 years old. This Centennial Volume, as is with this tree, we offer to our children and our children's children so they in future years will know wherein their roots are planted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Those who have labored on the pages found in this volume wish to express their thanks to those who contributed in its fulfillment in any way. It would have been most difficult to compile the story of Witt without the assistance of those family and business histories which are herein produced; those who gave freely of their time, advice, knowledge and pictures; those who contributed financially; and many, many more. It would be more difficult to name each individually.

However, we would be amiss if we did not thank Mr. Eddie Hargrave, who sketched the drawing of Broadway on the cover; Miss Frances Pircher extends her grateful thanks to Mr. Duane McKee whose research on early Witt History was an invaluable aid to her writing of the history of the city. And we would like to thank Mr. Joe Cabello, Jr., and Mr. William Conway for the many pictures presented of Witt 1968.

Our hope is that the fruits of our labors be your joy, pleasure, and satisfaction in reading this volume.

ANDREW SARSANY

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